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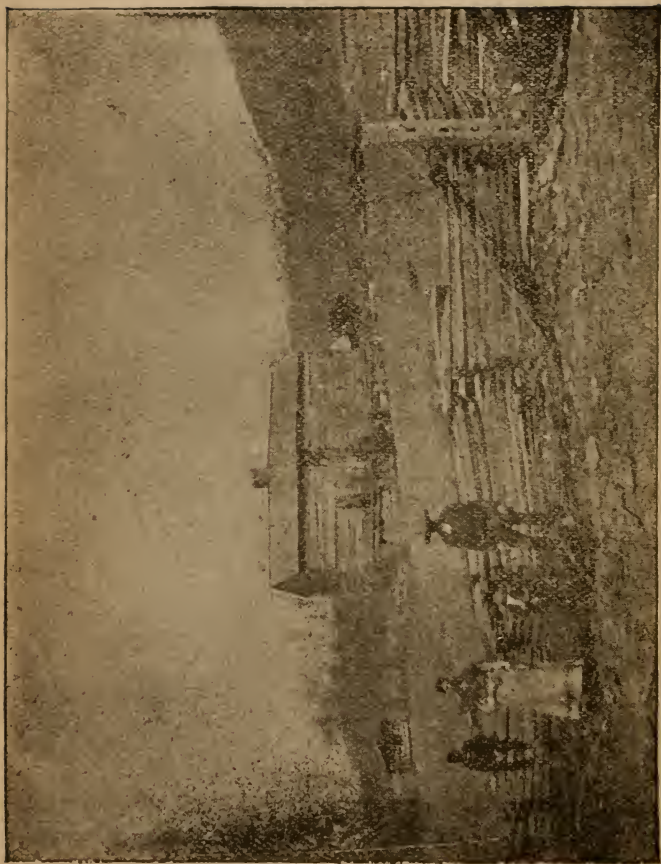


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TOM BAKER'S HOME.

LIFE

IN

The Hills of Kentucky

BY

W. E. BARTON.

OBERLIN, O.

E. J. GOODRICH.

1890.

756.

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B. H.

May 11, 1894

B.

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YRABU OLUBU
BHT 70
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TO
MY SISTER,
MRS. GEORGE M. PATTERSON.

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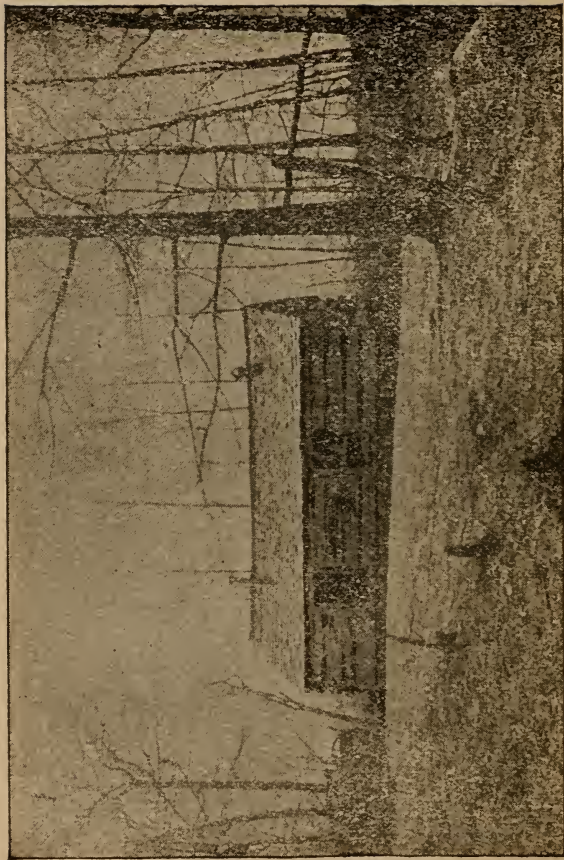
PREFACE.

Encouraged by the favorable reception of "The Wind-Up of the Big Meetin' on No Business," I have spun two other slender threads of fiction, strung them with incidents from life, and bound the three together. These stories, though not distinctively religious, attempt especially to set forth the religious life of the mountain folk. Each "meetin'" described, though chosen because of some unusual event connected with it, and not to be taken as the average mountain meeting, is a simple or composite photograph. The postscript to the first edition of the "Big Meetin'," retained in this, renders superfluous any further explanation of the author's purpose, and his sympathy for these loyal, hospitable people.

While writing these pages, my thoughts have turned often to my dear friend, Charles H. Norton, kind-hearted, generous and brave, who died November 6th, 1886. While neither he nor the author appears as a character in this book, they witnessed together many of its scenes.

W. E. B.

OBERLIN, December 1st, 1889.



NO BUSINESS CHURCH-HOUSE.

THE WIND-UP OF THE BIG MEETIN' ON NO BUS'NESS.

I.

"They will be night meetin' hyur tonight at early candle-lightin', an the meetin' 'll wind up termorrer. At the wind up of the meetin' we'll open the doors of the church an' *babtize* them candidates that desires fur to be *babtized*. I reckon this hyur has been norated aready so's every person understans it. An' neow ef all minds is discharged we'll crave the benediction."

So spoke Brother Jeems Albright at the close of the service on Saturday afternoon in the No Bus'ness church-house. All minds seemed to be discharged—whatever that may mean—and the benediction was "craved." Tom Baker and the other young men with him sat near the door and were the first outside, where they joined a larger company of their own age who had not been in, or if in at all had remained but a short time, and returned to watch the horses, preferring the genial society of those who sat around on logs in the woods, to the instruction administered in allopathic doses to those within.

In a more leisurely manner the remainder of the congregation moved out, and for some time remained standing around in knots and inviting each other to go home with them. He who had but one spare bed invited from a dozen to forty guests, and he who lived a mile from the church-house was invited to "go by" with him who lived five. Indeed, each family ran a whole gauntlet of invitations; being invited to go by with almost every other family present, and generally declining and returning the invitation no matter how certain that it would not be accepted.

Slowly the church house disgorged its congregation; and when at last the half-dozen preachers emerged with saddle-bags on their arms, it stood vacant. Not a very stylish edifice, this temple in the backwoods of Kentucky—a mere log pen with a leaky roof, the cracks between the logs daubed with mud and covered on the inside with strips split from logs. The floor was puncheon; the seats were rough, backless affairs with holes bored through for the legs, which projected an inch or more beyond the surface of the bench, making a rather uncomfortable seat for the second person from the end. The older seats were hewn out; and the newer ones were made by driving legs into slabs

from the saw mill. This saw mill, by the way, was a new enterprise, and one that had in a degree revolutionized life on No Bus'ness. It made a variety of unseemly sounds on the hitherto solemnly silent stream, waking with its shrill whistle the angry echoes, which mockingly answered the voice of the unwelcome visitor; and the hills took up the sound and told it to the hills beyond, and these in a fainter voice to hills yet more remote, and hill answered hill until all the woods seemed peopled with strange, weird voices joined in an uncanny chorus of threatening and mocking—enough to have frightened a timid or superstitious saw mill into repentance for its rash intrusion into such a region. But the saw mill held its ground, and day after day puffed and whistled and sputtered away on the lonely stream.

For No Bus'ness is a creek. A legend is current concerning the name, that the first man who ascended the stream returned with the report that "A human haint got no bus'ness up that ar creek." A good many humans, however, subsequently found their way up that ar creek and stayed there. They named the creek's two tributaries respectively "Troublesome" and "Difficulty", and the main stream retained its enigmatical appellation, 'No Bus'-

ness." It is a rapid mountain torrent, at times almost dry, at others "swimmin'-deep." The number of feet which it can rise in a few hours is something almost incredible, and although the periods of its rampage are as brief as violent, it is looked upon with good reason as a very fickle-minded, treacherous stream.

On either side rise high perpendicular bluffs, between which from the valley below, only a small segment of the sky is visible; and the feeling comes and grows upon one, that the little world along the creek is very much farther from heaven than the tops of the parallel bluffs on either side. What mighty cliffs they are! Three hundred feet of sandstone with a thick stratum of fossiliferous limestone, then sandstone with traces of coal, and the whole surmounted by hard conglomerate, rising in majestic castles and standing out in overhanging masses beyond the softer rock below. A geologist had once visited No Bus'ness. He had hired his board for a week at old Lijah Hale's and had roamed up the creek and over the hills in a delight which the open-eyed natives had at first regarded as insane. Later they brought him queer rocks which had been saved by the children as "purties" and asked him if the quartz crystals from geodes were diamonds. They

gathered about him in wonder while he talked of things which they understood as little as Sanskrit; surprised that so great a man should go to such botherment to learn so much about *jest rocks*. But when he showed to the little company which nightly gathered at old 'Lijah's, the fossils he had collected, and talked of the vast ages which had elapsed since these fossils had lived, and told them that the creek had once flowed on top of the bluff and gradually through untold ages worn its bed through the solid rock to its present depression, they attempted to remonstrate with him, and failing to change his opinion pronounced him "a nin-fidel," and warned him to leave. Jake Finch was most active in driving him off, combining business with pleasure, and his anxiety for the public welfare with the redress of an injury which he had suffered in his feelings by reason of a rebuke administered by said geologist.

"He treated me mighty abrupt," said Jake. "He come up an' went to sorter nosin' around over my farm, an' thinks me I'll jes' sorter go long, sez I, kase theys a lead mind somers on my farm that the Injuns used ter run bullets from, 'n' ef he finds 'er, sez I, I want to be somers round, sez I; 'n' I've heard tell of that ar Swift

silver mind roun' hyur or over in Whitley, one, an' thinks me, mebbe she's hyur. An' we come down by the branch whar we het the rocks at, fur to drap in the bar'l fur to bile the water fur to scald hogs, 'n' ee picked up a piece of a rock what had busted wen I drapped her into the water. Hit war a powerful curus rock—hit war plum round an' sorter holler on both sides, sorter like a deesh. I 'member sorter noticin' of it wen I picked 'er up, an' a thinkin' I'd take 'er home fur the chaps to play with fur 'em a purty, or to hole the shetter to the door open, but I jest 'lowed twarnt while to tote her up to the house, kase one of the heenges to the door is broke an' I haint got round to cut me a with fur to make another one 'n' so the shetter to the door sorter stays open 'thout nuthin fur ter hold 'er. An' thinks me, I've got ye picked up now, 'n' ef I drap ye I'll jes' hatter pick up 'nother, so in ye go, sez I. An wen she got hot an' I drapped 'er inter the water she busted. Wal, ef twarnt a plum sight in the world to see that feller wen he found it. He acted like he'd cry. He said hit war a sorter mill fur ter grin' corn that some ole feller—a Injun or some ole coot—hed sorter made him fur to grind him his grist. An' wen I tole the feller 'bout me a-fin'in' it an' how come 'er broke, he got plum cat.

awampus. 'Warn't they rocks 'nuff 'roun' thout you a takin' that air un?' sez ee. Sez I, 'You needn't afeel so bad,' sez I. 'They grind of a Saturday down to the saw mill, an' ole Preacher Jake Watts he's got him a water mill up on Bull Creek and grin's wen theys a fraish in the creek, an' ole Tom Giles up on the backbone has got him a hit-'em-agin fur dry weather 'th a hole burnt out of a hick'ry stump an' a sweep sorter lack a well sweep 'th a iron waige in the eend of it fur to jerk down 'th a rope an' keep a hittin' twell she's gits sorter fine,' sez I. 'Theys mills nuff, sez I, ef you've got any grin'in', sez I, 'thout awantin' ye any sich a audashus ole rig as thet ar,' sez I. 'Peared like that ort ter a pacified him, but hit made him madder. 'Ef you'd a knowd as much,' sez ee, 'ez the man wut made that ar mortar,' sez ee, 'you'd a knowd mor'n to a busted 'er wen they warnt no need fur it,' sez ee. An' I sorter got a leetle ashy an' sez I, 'You dag-gonned ole infidel,' sez I, 'wut d'ye mean?' sez I. 'You acomin' 'round hyur a smashin' rocks an' a huntin' ye up ole holler rocks,' sez I, 'fur yer wife ter grind 'er corn,' sez I, 'stidder you a stay-in' to hum an' a totin hit to mill fur 'er,' sez I, 'Dag-gon yer dog-gonned pictur! You git out o' hyur! an' clar out orfum thishyur branch,' sez

I, 'we haint got no use fur a ninfidel,' sez I. 'Go home 'n' crack corn 'th that ar hammer o' yourn ef you want a mill,' sez I, 'dag-gon your dag-gonned skin! You git out o' hyur!—Git 'n' stay got! or I'll git me a bresh and give ye a ginteel good linten,' sez I."

Jake repeated this conversation to each family on the creek, adding to his own speech, and increasing the number of maledictions with each recitation, and growing more and more abusive as the intelligence that the geologist had "sure gone" became more evidently true. And all the people said Amen, and whatever may be said of "humans" in general, it is certainly true that a geologist "haint got no bus'ness up that ar creek" even unto this day. The horrified and injured feeling with which the visit of that "infidel" is remembered will never be entirely removed. Even the discovery that the mill hands, who came from Indiana, believed the earth round, produced far less commotion.

During this long, tedious digression, the people whom we left in front of the church-house when "meetin' broke," have about completed their preparations for departure. All the acceptable invitations have been accepted, but the form of inviting will be kept up as long as two families are together.

"Go by, Dick, you'n your ole woman."

"No, caint, I reckon. You all go up 'ith me."

"We would, but we caint leave handy; you all best stay over to night meetin'."

"No, I reckon not. We lef' the chaps alone."

"O, Marthy's big nuff ter look atter them—you best stop over."

"No, I reckon we caint this time."

"Well, wy don't you never come an' bring the children an' set with us a spell. 'Pears like you've forsook us hyur."

"No, we haint forsook ye. We're 'bout ter move down 'n' live off o' you alls. We'll git back ter meetin' termorrer."

"Good bye, then, ef nuthin' else won't do ye."

"Good bye."

A few of those who live at a distance have decided to go by with those who live nearer. Two of the preachers and a half-dozen of the visitors from the head waters of Troublesome and Difficulty went home with Elijah Hale. And Tom Baker went, also. He is the most important man in this story, not even excepting Brethren Jeems Albright and Ab Duncan, the two preachers whom you see yonder, with saddlebags behind them, on their lank steeds threading the serpentine road down the point to Elijah Hale's.

Old 'Lijah Hale was one of the most prosperous men on No Business. The narrow valley widened a few yards at his farm, and the hill rose a little less perpendicularly, enabling him to "make a crap" on its slope. There was corn in his log crib until corn came again, and plenty of bacon in his smoke house—excepting in those years when the mast was light, when he may perhaps have run a little short of that greasy but staple commodity. He was looked up to as a man of influence in both church and state, being an influential member of the church, and a Justice of the Peace. The shelf nailed to the beams above the door in his house contained 'the marster sight o' books mighty nigh ever you seed"—leather bound books, entitled "Acts" and "Statutes," "Property of the State of Kentucky." 'Lijah always brought them out when he had a case to try, but never read any from them, though he sometimes looked vaguely through them under pretense of hunting up the law. His verdicts were peculiar to himself, the following being a specimen:—

"Wall, I've been a huntin' up the law, an' hit don't kiver this case, 'pears like—eenahow hit don't hit the case center, p'int blank, the way hit had oughter—but jist atakin' a sorter common sense view of the case, hit 'pears like ter

me that Rube hadn't oughter a hit Bob, an' Bob he hadn't oughter a cussed Rube. An' I reckon I best not find nary one 'o yer an' each feller kin pay their own costis," which decision was accepted by all parties as both legal and just.

Oid 'Lijah had a numerous progeny. Three or four of his oldest children were married, and the ages of the others tapered regularly down to Ben, aged eight, and Juley Ann, a spoiled little miss of about six summers, and one additional autumn and winter. The oldest children left at home were Lindy, aged seventeen, and Thaddeus who was not quite sixteen—a big awkward fellow whom every one called "Thad" except on state occasions, when his father called him Thaddea.

Lindy is a rosy, rather buxom miss. She can ride a horse well as you notice, for Tom has brought her horse and his around to the three sections of unequal length cut from the end of a log, upended so as to form a series of steps from which a lady can mount—known as stile-blocks—and Lindy sits erect in her saddle and shows herself at ease there. She does not often ride to church, her father and mother using Old 'Lijah's two horses, but her mother stayed at home today to arrange for the meeting tomorrow, so Lindy rides her mother's

horse. Her movements on the ground are hardly graceful. Her step is not light, for her shoes are heavy, and she walks chiefly to get around. But on a horse she appears at her best. So look well at her as she starts off with Tom Baker somewhat bashfully riding beside her, for Lindy makes her best appearance now, and she is worthy of whatever there may be favorable in your first impression of her.

Her accomplishments are of rather a practical sort. She can kill and dress a chicken, make biscuit and corn bread, spin somewhat and weave a little. She can figure part way through fractions, read in the fourth reader and spell over to "luminary" in the "old blueback."

The fact shall not be concealed from you, that Lindy's parents looked upon her high education as unnecessary, and felt that they had performed a work of supererrogation if not a positive wrong in sending her to school so much. There was some excuse for them, to be sure, for the school-house was so near and Lindy liked to go so well that they could hardly find it in their hearts to keep her away, but they had felt no little anxiety as to the result of so liberal an education upon a girl; and their alarm had been increased this last session by her request for a grammar and a "g'og'ify."

"Hit taint right, 'cordin' to my way o' think-in', to be a spendin' sich a heap o' money fur to buy gals a hull passel o' books 'bout all them ar things as gals haint no call fur to know," her father said. "You've got nuff o' books now ef you'll read 'em, fur all the use you'll have fur books. All thisyur education haint no 'count fur gals. Better educate 'em fur to be pore men's wives."

So Lindy's appropriation bill was promptly vetoed.

The procession that went down the creek halted for a few moments before the post-and-railing in front of 'Lijah Hale's cabin.

"All 'light an' go in," said 'Lijah. "Thaddea, you strip them beastis an' take 'em out an' give 'em a couple o' bundles o' fodder 'n' a leetle grain o' corn apiece. Turn Bill 'n' ole Balley inter the lot, 'n' I reckon you kin stan' that gray with Brother Jinkinses nag. Yer hoss won't kick will he, Brother Jinkins? Fetch them saddles inside whur them calves won't chaw 'em all up. Jes' walk inside. Bill, you all best stop in, too. Gi' down, Jim, an' stop over. Wall, get along hum then an' git ye a snack. Hit won't be long twill night meetin'. Come in, come in. Jinny, jes you run ter the spring an' fetch a fraish bucket o' water. You'll hev ter take a

gourd, the one at the spring is broke. Jim fetch us some cheers out hyur. Put yerself level on a cheer, Brother Duncan. Se' down, Brother Albright. Brother Jenkins take a cheer an' se' down. Ole woman! got supper mos' ready? We're gittin' sorter nibbly at the craw. Se' down, gentlemen. The ole woman 'll hev us a snack ready right soon now, I reckon. Hev water? Yes, mighty good water. Haint no better nowhurs, I reckon. Now, Jinny, you run 'long 'n' help yer maw—Lindy 'pears ter be slow 'bout gittin' in."



"TOM WALKED HOME WITH LINDY."

II.

Lindy did appear to be slow this evening. She and Tom had lagged a little behind the party, an unusual thing for a mountain couple to do; but Tom "had been a talkin' to Lindy a right smart little bit now," and the affair was considered settled by the No Bus'ness gossips. But it wasn't settled. Both Tom and Lindy considered it as good as settled, and both were anxious to have it settled. The courtship had progressed slowly, though pleasantly. Tom had walked home from meetings with Lindy many times, keeping with the crowd. When they had arrived at the house, Lindy had gone inside with the women, and Tom had sat outside on the porch with the men until it was time for him to leave. In short, it had been an orthodox mountain courtship, with nothing to ruffle the even current of true love, until No Bus'ness was stirred by this big meeting. And Lindy's mother had disturbed matters a trifle.

Lindy's mother had no particular objection to this match. Indeed, she favored it; but like many good women, she could not let a court-

ship work out its own solution without a desire to make her influence felt in some capacity. She had had no hand in making the match, and could not afford to assent to it too readily. She whined often about being left alone, and complained of Lindy's ingratitude and Jinny's inexperience—the theme affording an excellent opportunity to find fault with both girls at once. Lindy paid little attention to these complaints. She understood her mother's natural tendency to "mean Yes and say No." But now her objections assumed a different phase. Lindy had been to the mourners' bench in the meetings and was to join the church tomorrow, and her mother felt that she ought to give her some good advice, and was absolutely unable to give advice for the future without some complaint about the present. Mrs. Hale was a woman who had "seed a heap o' trouble," as she often affirmed with a doleful voice and a significant shake of the head, and she succeeded tolerably well in making others share her troubles with her.

"Thishyur is a world o' trouble," she frequently said, *apropos* of anything whatever or of nothing at all, as she removed her short pipe and spat into the ashes, "an' they haint no use inyer tryin' ter git away from it." And to Mrs.

Hale's credit and consistency be it said that she made no effort to escape trouble, but yielded without a struggle to the inevitable, took gratefully all the trouble that came to her, and hunted up all that she could find in addition.

She took a morbid delight in it. She always visited a sick-bed and kept the details fresh in mind to compare with those of any like occasion, or to reproduce at the funeral six months or a year after the death of the patient. She herself had "indigestion of the stummick" and "a hurtin' in her breast" and "a misery in her back" and a host of other cheerful infirmities whose symptoms she detailed with scrupulous exactness to every listener. It will be readily understood that this estimable lady whined and found fault with the best of intentions, but not always the best of results.

"Hit 'pears like ter me," she said to Lindy, "as how gals that's been for'ard in meetin' and is gwine to be *baptized* and ter jine the church, hadn't ort to be agaddin 'roun' the kentry 'th young fellows as haint got religion."

Lindy made no reply but had thought of the same thing; and her mother's words had more effect than was expected or desired.

"The Bible's mighty plain 'bout all sich as

that air," her mother continued, after a pause during which she had been using her apron for a handkerchief, "'bout bein' onekilly yoked together 'th them as haint a pullin' the way you're agwine. *I* allers thought ef anybody's agwine ter perfess anything, let 'em live up to it, or not perfess it, *one*." Having thus spoken, she filled her pipe, scooped it into the ashes for a coal, patted the red ember with her toughened forefinger, and smoked in silence, feeling that she had delivered her own soul and done something toward saving Lindy's, but without a thought that Lindy would heed her words.

Lindy, however, dwelt upon her mother's speech until she was very unhappy, and in this frame of mind had gone to meeting this Saturday afternoon. The burden was heavier than ever when she started homeward. A song which had been sung this afternoon kept running through her mind; every motion of herself and horse kept time to its rythm—

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne
And worship only Thee."

Was Tom an idol? Was he likely to come between her and God? Her mother's words, her own feelings and the half superstitious in-

clination to regard this hymn, sung at a time so appropriate, as a revelation, perplexed her sorely. Another thing, too, had happened. Brother Ab Duncan in his "sarmint" had said:—

"Ef yer 'spect ter be a Christian yer gotter give up everything that haint Christian. I like ter see religion that's like a ole woman's fat-gourd. The grease is inside, but ye kin see hit a sloppin' all over the surface. Ef you've a takin' to a gal an' a studyin' 'bout amarryin' her, an' she's a trifler, or a fiddler, or a dancer, you've just gotter choose atwix her 'n' God. You haint got no more use for a wife nohow 'n' a hoss has got fur horns."

Tom was neither a trifler nor a fiddler nor a dancer, but a quiet, sober young man; but he was not a Christian, and brother Duncan's remarks seemed to bear directly on the case in hand. Lindy's duty began to seem plain to her. Only her own wicked heart had kept her from seeing it before. Every thought that her duty might admit of another course was stifled as a suggestion of the tempter, and as evidence of her own wickedness; and with a desperate struggle, Lindy determined to dethrone her idol.

Half the short ride home was accomplished before either spoke; then Tom said:

"So yer goin' ter be *babtized* termorrer, be ye, Lindy?" And Lindy said "Yes."

"Be ye goin' ter jine Albright or Duncan?" Lindy didn't know no difference.

"I wouldn't jine Duncan, nohow," said Tom. "I'll be dad-burned if I like so much '*High-ah! an' a Brother-ah!*'" which remark tended to confirm Lindy's decision, for she regarded it as evidence of Tom's totally unregenerate mind.

Tom was uneasy. No words concerning marriage had ever passed between himself and Lindy, yet he had believed the wedding a matter near at hand. His affection naturally stuck in his throat and did not manifest itself in words, yet he loved Lindy with all his big, bashful heart, and rejoiced in unmistakable evidence that his affection was reciprocated. During this meeting he had felt a growing uneasiness. Lindy had gone early to the mourners' bench, and since had seemed to be slipping away from him. Tom desired to be a Christian, but in spite of his training he found more in the meeting to repel than to attract him. He was disgusted with the excesses of the mourners and the senseless howling of the preachers, notwithstanding their evident sincerity. "Looks like hits a mighty pore way to git religion," he said to himself, "but I don't know ary

nother." So he had not followed Lindy to the mourners' bench, and had felt a sort of jealousy that Lindy should have gone without him. This afternoon she seemed farther from him than ever, and Tom rashly determined to secure her before she escaped him. The house was in sight before he spoke:

"Lindy—when—when—er—how soon d'ye reckon we best to get married?"

Lindy hesitated a moment, looked away from Tom and said desperately, "I don't guess we had best to git married a tall."

Although Tom had felt a sort of premonition warning him of his rejection, and something within him said, "Just as I expected," he was stunned beyond the power of speech. Just as they reached the gate he said, "Lindy, you—you don' mean that ar?"

"Don' talk ter me," she replied, "I cain't stan' it."

"Come in Tom, you an' Lindy," called 'Lijah from the porch. "Jes' hitch yer beastes to the post-an'-railin'. Thad'll cyarry 'em out to the barn, an' you all come in." But Tom, having allowed Lindy to dismount on the stile-blocks, took her horse and his own to the barn. He took a little time to think over his condition, and for the time inclined to a hopeful view.

"Lindy's a mighty fine gal," he soliloquized, "but she's mighty feisty by spells. Suthin' 'r nuther has got her to feelin' bricky, an' she's just a *devilin' me for a spell. Or mebbly now when she's jest got religion she don't want to be pestered till atter the wind up of the meet-in'."

Having given himself as much comfort as the circumstances permitted, he went to the porch.

"Whar be ye gwine fur to hold meetin' at atter the final wind up hyur?" asked Brother Jenkins of Brother Albright.

"Over on the head waters of Hiwassy," was the reply.

"Wull, that's agittin' up mighty nigh to whur nothin' empties inter nowhur, haint it? Ole Bill Toosper over on Red Bird uster tell a tale 'bout a preacher that went over in thar, an' ee liked flour-bread powerful good, and ee'd hearn tell as how they didn't make none up thar, 'n' ee got 'is ole woman fur ter bake him a hull passel o' biskits, an' ee filled his saddle-pockets with 'em. An' wen ee got ter his pintmaint ter whar ee stayed all night at, he tuck him out a biskit, an' one of the leetle fellers thar was sorter watchin' on 'im and seed 'im, an' th' ole

*Devil, as here used, means to tease.

feller jes' gin 'im a biskit, an' the leetle chap he didn't know wut she was. An' ee showed hit to the tother leetle fellers an' they had a powerful big pow-wow fur to fine out wut hit war. An' finally the way hit eended one on 'em tuck the biskit an' laid hit on the haith, an' ee putt a coal on 'er, an' ee sez, sezee, *'I'll show ye wut 'tis. Hits a tarrypin; now you watch 'im 'n' you'll see 'im poke 'is laigs out.'*"

"Wull, hit must a bin over in thar ole Zeke Sanders went that time w'en he went off 'th the hog-drove—that time w'en they axed 'im w'en he come back whar ee'd bin at, an' ee said ee didn't know. "I dunno nuthin' 'bout it,' sezee, 'only I know I've bin to whar they call "*sop,*" "*gravy.*" "

The speaker laughed loudly at this threadbare tale, as did his audience, most of whom had heard it often before.

"Wull, did ye see Ole Zeke Sanderses Sam thar today? His pap 'n' his uncle Bill is trustees up in that ar Parch Corn deestrick, an' he's a keepin' the school up on thet ar branch, an' he's bin a buyin' hissself a hull passel o' store clo'es. Did ye see him in that stake-'n'-ridered collar an' them tight britches? I'll be doggonned ef he didn't look right comic."

"Ya-as, haint hit a plum sight wut a heap of

sich critters a feller *kin* see, wen he haint got no gun?"

This last was from Tom and raised a prolonged laugh. Tom wasted little affection on little Sam Sanders.

"I've heerd," suggested 'Lijah, "that the Methodis' war a cavortin' roun' powerful over on Hiwassy."

"Who war a tellin' ye?" asked Brother Albright.

"Wy, some one war a sayin' down to the blacksmith shop—hit war old Preacher Jake Watts or Tom Jeff Mitchell, one—I disremember which now, but pears like hit war ole man Watts, he war there a-gittin' him some shoes putt on his nag, an' hit war him or Tom Jeff, one. An' they war a sayin' that a feller by the name o' Hill was a takin' a powerful through an' had a hull house-full a shoutin' to wunct."

"I haint never heerd tell o' no sich preacher," said Brother Albright.

"He haint no preacher," said Duncan. "He haint never been ordained. The presidin' elder over on the Pore Fork conference gin 'im some license fur to exercise in public. I met him wunct wen I had a 'pintmaint on Smoky fur the third Saturday an' Sunday an' he had a 'pintmaint fur the fourth, an' they rule by the

Sundays stidder the Saturdays, an' the month come in of a Sunday an' so we conflicted. An' he wanted fur to divide the time, but sez I, 'We'll leave er to the congregation,' sez I, an' they voted fur to hear him, kase he was sorter new in the kentry. One feller sez, sezee, 'A new broom sweeps clean.' 'Yes,' sez I, 'but that taint wut ails you' sez I, 'the ole un knows too well whar the dirt is,' sez I. 'An' so he preached—he didn't preach none, but he tried—an' I stayed fur ter hear him, an' he called on me fur ter pray. An' sez I, 'I'll pray in my own meetin's. You go on with yer own sherackety,' sez I."

The conversation dropped for a while; then old 'Lijah remarked, "We had a right good meetin' this evenin'," but before any reply was made, and while Brother Duncan was leaning forward in his chair and puckering his lips preparatory to ejecting a mouthful of tobacco-juice beyond the edge of the porch, after which he probably would have spoken, supper was announced, and further conversation postponed. The men adjourned to supper, the women all waiting until the second table.

"Make a beginnin', Brother Albright," said 'Lijah, and Brother Albright returned thanks.

Then the biscuit was passed, and the chicken,

and the bacon and the corn pones, the tops of which bore three well-defined ridges corresponding to the depressions between Mrs. Hale's fingers. Strong coffee was served, flavored with "long-sweetinin'". The latter, having been passed, was set too close to Benny, who reached it and began to lick off what was draining down the outside of the tin cup.

"Benny!" called his mother, "you quit lickin' off them molasses! Lookee hyur! ef you don' behave an' ac' right you'll hev ter go way from the table! Hev milk, Brother Jinkins,—sweet milk ur buttermilk? Jinny, pour some buttermilk. He don't like to wait, Benny don't. He alers stan's thar right aside of his pap's cheer. He's a mighty feller fur his pap, Benny is."

Mrs. Hale was rather proud than otherwise of Benny's method of helping himself, inasmuch as the offense combined with her rebuke attracted general attention to him. Benny understood it and smiled sweetly, licking from his lips the molasses he had not succeeded in swallowing, and listening to the comments that followed.

"He's a mighty peart boy," said Brother Duncan.

"He's a mighty bad un," said his mother.

BIG MEETIN' ON 'NO B US'NESS.

"He will come to the table an' stan' aside of his pap; an he don' know how ter ac', 'pears like. He's alers bin a mighty pappy-boy. Hev pie, Brother Duncan? Lindy, han' thet pie."

Lindy laid down her paw-paw fly brush and passed the "high pie," composed of alternate layers of biscuit dough, and apple sauce cooked in grease. The pie was freely partaken of, and the meal was finished in silence. Each man, as he finished, rose from the table and returned to the porch, seizing the opportunity as he stooped to pass through the low door into the "other house," to draw the back of his hand across his mouth; his hand and mouth being nearer together at that moment than usual, the act was performed with the minimum expenditure of labor.

"We had a right good meetin'," said 'Lijah, taking up the conversation where it had been dropped.

"Yas, hit was a powerful good meetin'," said Brother Duncan.

"Bill Smith come for'ard," said Brother Jinkins. "D'ye reckon he'll hold out?"

"I dunno," said Brother Duncan. "He tuck it too easy. Now, Joe Bates, he jes' go' down an' rolled on the floor an' yelled fur mercy, an wan't noways p'tic'lar *how* much dirt they war

whar he rolled. *Thet* looked more like bus'-ness."

"Tom, hits 'bout time for *you* to make a break, hain't it?" asked 'Lijah.

"I reckon 'tis," said Tom, "but 'pears like I isn't ready."

"You had best ter *git* ready," said Brother Albright. "Ef you'd a started at the fust, you mought a been out by this time."

Tom made no reply, and Brother Duncan attempted to clinch the matter by asking as he whittled a chew from a twist of home made tobacco with a large Barlow knife, "D'ye want to go down to thet pit that we tole the people about this evenin'?" And again Tom was silent.

Pipes were produced, and each man, after filling, entered the kitchen for a coal and returned to the porch for a smoke. The sun was almost down, and the moon was rising over the point at the bend of the creek. Soon they knocked the ashes from their pipes, and started for night meeting, all on foot but Tom, who was not to return, it being thought easier by the others to walk than to put out the horses on their late return. Lindy and her mother and Jinny stayed at home, the girls to do up the work and their mother to guard her health.

"I caint never go out none of a night," the latter said, "hit jest sets my bonès ter achin' the wust way in the world. I've alers bin a mighty hand to go to church an' ter meetins' an' funerals. Thet's the way I war raised. Jist attar the war I went to one meetin' over on Gum Fork, day an' night fur three weeks, han' runnin'. Ole Brother Jim Perkins preached, an' babtized over forty in Skull Bone, whar hit empties inter the Gum Fork. He died eight year from the next spring. He had the phthisic mighty bad. I've heered him preach when hit 'peared like he couldn't git no breath; fust preach a spell, then wheeze a spell, then preach a spell 'n' then wheeze a spell, twill he got sorter warmed through, an' then laws a massy! how he *culd* preach! 'Peared lack the shingles 'ud fly orfum the roof. But sence the time I had the fever seven year ago fodder-pullin' time, an' ole Doctor Sam Perry gin me so much calomile an' salivated me, I've bin just ruined fur goin' out of a night. I tell ye, I like these yer yarb doctors—them's *my* doctors. Wy, Doctor Bill Skinner, from the head o' Smoky, he gin Sally Ann Bailey calomile, an' I seed him when he done it, too, an' I *thought* he war a givin' her too much; but I never said nothin', and he gin that girl calo-

mile—she was just a turnin' sixteen, an' had the *dipthery*—an' he gin her—”

How long Mrs. Hale would have continued, no man knows, but at this point her hearers started for night meeting, and her story closed abruptly.

Off the procession started, the preachers with their saddle-bags, 'Lijah with a little brass lamp, and Tom, in spite of the comfort he tried to force upon himself, with a heavy heart.

III.

The dishes were washed, the preparations for morning completed, and Lindy went to bed. The beds, six in number, were in two rooms, partially separated by the large double chimney. The space on one side was open; on the other it was closed by a partition, and a ladder stood there, by means of which the smaller children ascended to bed in the loft; for there they were to sleep to-night, to make room below for the guests. Lindy did not find it easy to get to sleep. She thought of Tom. What would he do now? Had she done right? If not, what ought she to have done? These and like questions troubled her as she lay awake and thought. She tried to think of other things—of the meeting to-morrow, what she should say when asked to tell her experience, whether she would choke in the water, whether Tom would be there—and then she was back again in the old train of thought.

Then she tried to think of the meeting to-night. She could picture it to herself—the low pole rafters half revealed by the light, of

two or three smoking brass lamps, the audience leaning forward with elbows on their knees, the dogs lying in the aisle until disturbed by some later comers and then changing their position to the open space before the rough slab pulpit. She could imagine it all; she could almost see and hear Brother Hopkins as he rose to announce the opening hymn. Brother Hopkins usually did this, for he was not regarded as a very able preacher, and this was an easy way to make him feel that he had been honored with a part in the service. He always produced an antiquated hymn-book and invariably lined the same hymn. Lindy imagined she could hear the alternate lining and singing:

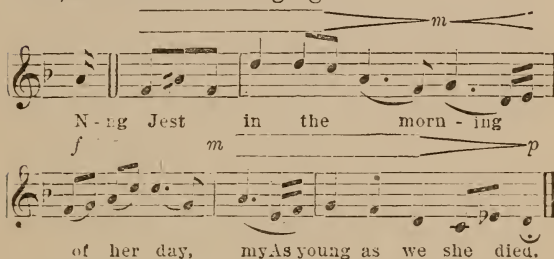
*"Death has been hyur and bore away
A sister from eour side,*

"Sung to the use of common maisure. All sing:"

N-n-n-ng Death has ben hyur ran uore ra-
way, M - m - A sis - ter from eour side !

*"Jest in the morning of 'er day
As young as we she died."*

And Lindy could hear the shuffling of feet which accompanied the rising of the congregation, and the voices singing--



*"Not long ago she filled her place
And sot with us chew larn."*

Thus Lindy followed it through its multitude of stanzas and repeated the last two lines of the last stanza. Then the doleful minor strain adjusted itself to other words, and they started an interminable running through her mind:

*"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be!"*

And she mentally lined the remainder of the stanza and sang that, and then took up a continual Da Capo. She tossed so uneasily on her straw bed that Jinny found it difficult to sleep, and said:

"Wist you cud lay still. 'Pears lack you squirm 'n' twist 'n' wiggle lack er flea on a hot shovel. I caint git to sleep nary wink."

Lindy was still awake when the folks returned from meeting. Old Shep's bark and the terrific uproar of the feist* announced their coming. Both dogs met the company at the gate, making a terrible ado to convince their master that were he any one else they would eat him. The two lank hounds, however, after as noisy a bark as either of their companions, returned to the porch, and quietly slipped with the company into the house.

"Come in all," said old 'Lijah. "Rest your hats on that ar table. Take cheers an' se' down. Jes' pull up that bainch ef they haint cheers 'nuff. I'll hev ter cut a fo' stick an' see ef we caint recruit the far a leetle. Hyur, *Thaddea! Thad!* Them boys! Keeps dogs—fur coon purpisis! Git eout o' hyur, you triflin', no 'count critters! 'Thad, you keep them dawgs o' yourn eout of thishurchimbly corner. They haint room fur *folks* ter set. Fetch us in a fo' stick hyur an' some o' that ar pine. A far feels mighty good thesyer cold nights. Shet that ar door. Wile we're hot we'll try ter *keep* hot."

FEIST, a little dog. Sometimes spelled "fice." But it is always pronounced with a final "t."

Thad brought the fore-stick, and calling the hounds, started on a coon-hunt with some of the boys from up the creek. The fire soon began to burn brightly, and helped to consume the oxygen of the apartment. In most of the houses on No Bus'ness, ventilation was better provided for than almost any other necessity or convenience, but 'Lijah Hale's was thoroughly clinked and daubed, and there were no windows. A breath of outside air would have been a luxury to any lungs unused to such experience; but the company could have slept equally well with the wind blowing onto them through a six inch crack, or in an air-tight box with a whole family and a hot fire. The air in the Hale mansion must have been well de-oxydized by the time each occupant of the six beds—some fifteen persons—had inhaled it, and the fire had burned it for a few consecutive hours; but the Hale family and their guests slept the sleep of the just and lived through the night as usual.

Next morning, breakfast was eaten and preparations for meeting were slowly made. A full hour before meeting time the families from up the creek came by and stopped before the post-and-railing, with—

“Hello!”

"Howdy!" called 'Lijah. "Come in. Gi' down, Jim. Come in, all of you."

"No, we aint got time, I reckon."

"O you've got time a plenty. Come in."

"No, I reckon we best keep a stirrin'. Gwine ter meetin'?"

"Yes, we're agwine up thoreckly. Come in, we'll be ready right soon now."

"Wull—I dunno. Hev yer got any fraish water up?"

"Yes, come in. Hyar, Thad! You run—Thaddea! Whur's Thad at? Hyur, Jinny, you run an' get a fraish bucket o' water right quick. Gi' down 'n' come in 'n' we'll go long up thoreckly."

This dialogue, with some variations, had been repeated at each house since the little procession had started down the creek, receiving like a snowball, continual accretions as it descended. Jinny came with the water, of which all partook, and in a short time the preparations, quickened by the arrival of the folks from up the creek, were completed; and the procession started with its final additions.

Little Johnny Hopkins walked with Lindy and told her about the last night's meeting. Johnny was the son of Brother Hopkins, who usually opened the meetings. He said:—

"Did you ever hyur my pap pray? Wen my pap prays he prays. *Ab Duncan caint preach!* Las' night wen we got home, my pap sez, '*Less pray!*' an' we all go' down on our knees an' the house jes shuck!"

Lindy inferred from this, that Brother Hopkins desired promotion, and that his prayer at home last night had been a sort of private rehearsal for the more conspicuous part he expected to take in today's services.

Soon they came to the church-house, outside which the people were gathered in homogeneous knots. Lindy soon found the group of girls of her own age, and together they started for the spring. On the way back they met some young men, among them Tom; but Tom looked the other way, and Lindy felt guilty.

Tom had ridden after last night's meeting to his home "on the divide atwixt Troublesome and Difficulty." As soon as he was alone, the little hope he had clung to forsook him. It was not a mere freak on Lindy's part. Her announcement to him was the result of a positive decision, and he well knew that the little miss had a will so strong that some thought her stubborn. No, it was settled. But why had she refused him? A sudden thought struck him—Sam Sanders.

"Hits that trifling leetle feist," he said to himself savagely. "I knowed he war a sorter hangin' round her, but I *didn't* think she war sech a fool as ter want *him*. I s'pose hits sorter nateral fur a gal to lack nice clo'es, but—. Wul, I dunno as I ort to blame 'er. No, I haint got nothin' to say agin Lindy. Ef she wants Sam Sanders, she kin hev him, I haint a keerin'. She mought better keep a honest heart nor to sling hit away fur a stake-'n'-ridered collar. Wul! A gal that'll talk to a feller as long as she's ben a talkin' to me, an' then slight him fur a leetle, triflin', no 'count critter like *him*, I'll be dog-take-my-cats ef I want her!"

So Tom said to himself, but he never knew how much he loved Lindy until that moment. No matter how strenuously the fox asserts his belief in the acidity of the grapes, his desire for them varies as the square root of their distance beyond his reach.

The conjecture that Sam Sanders was his favored rival, grew more and more certain in Tom's mind, until before morning he had recalled a dozen trivial events which had not for a moment excited his suspicion at the time they occurred; but any one of which would have been enough, in his present state of mind, to convince him.

"Trifles light as air are to the jealous confirmation
strong,
As proof of holy writ."

But one thing was settled. He would not stay there to see Lindy married to Sam Sanders. He would leave No Bus'ness. He had been brought up on the little farm on top of the ridge and had never been twenty miles from it.

"The craps is done made," he said to himself, "an' pap kin git along 'thout me. He'll hatter do it sometime. Jes' soon as they comes a fraish in the creek, Dan Walker 'll be a wantin' fur ter float them raftis o' warnut logs down to the river, an' him 'n' me's good friends. I kin git a job ter go 'long down on one on 'em. The moon's mighty nigh full, an' hits a wet moon. They'll be a rain right soon, an' then 'Good bye No Bus'ness.' Theys a heap o' ways to git 'long when a feller gits eout inter the world."

This decision he reached before he slept. In the morning he started back to the church-house, drawn by a desire to see Lindy for the last time. Besides, Dan Walker would be at the meeting.

He found Dan as he had expected, early on the ground and easily made the desired arrangement.

"I reckon hits agwine to rain right soon,"

said Dan. "The wind is south-east, an' ole Rockyface war a roarin' powerful this mornin'. I look for fallin' weather tonight or termorrer, one. Soon's hit begins, we'll git down, an' be ready to shove out with the fraish."

Then they were joined by others and walked to the spring, passing Lindy on the way. Although Tom resolutely looked the other way, his heart beat very fast.

Soon they heard Brother Albright inside, singing in stentorian tones, "Babylon is Fallen," and this signal—church bell and organ voluntary combined—caused the house to be filled.

Some delay followed, for the crowd was too large for the house. The benches were moved out and more were extemporized from blocks and stones with fence rails laid across, and meeting began in earnest.

IV.

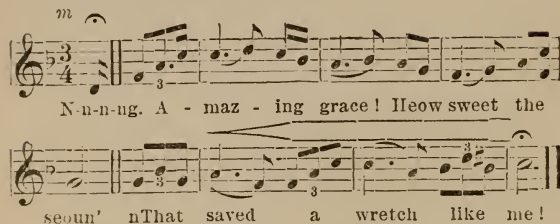
Brother Hopkins did not line the opening hymn this morning. Brother Simmons from "way up eouten Bell" did that. He prefaced as follows:—

"My dear brethering an' friens, an' dyin' congregation, we hev met hyur in this place today on thisher leetle rise o' ground, fur the purpis, ef eour hearts deceive us not, of Divine wuship. Awhilst amany of eour feller beins-ah! as good as *us* by nater an' fai-ai-air *better* by practice-ah! has eout-stripped us in the narrer *la-ane* o' life-ah! an' gone to people the pa-a-ale nashins o' the dead-ah! An' hit air meet upon this solemn occasion-ah! thet we shud dro-or *in* the worndrins of eour min's-ah! from *yearth* an' the perishin' *things* of yearthr-ha! an' *fix* um upon heaving, an' immortal glory-ah! To wich eend we invite you, my friendly congregation, to sing the beautiful hyme:—

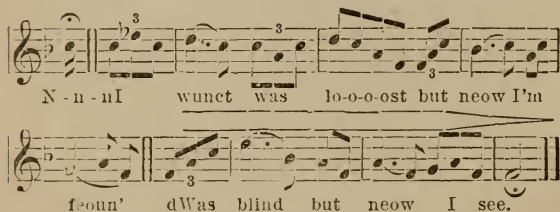
*"Amazin' grace heow sweet the seoun'
Thet saved a wretch lack me.*

Sung to the use of common maisure. Thank

some brother to pitch an' kerry the chune, an'
all the brethering jine in."



*"I wunct was lost but neow I'm found,
Was blind but neow I see."*



All sang the air except one or two young men, who having learned "to bass," dragged out one long tonic, changing once in each couplet at just the wrong place to a discordant dominant; and one old woman, with a voice like a cracked fife, who squeaked out something like a tenor.

After the "hyme," Brother Hopkins offered prayer, with such effect that one might readily

believe Johnny's statement that "the house jes' shuck." After shouting himself hoarse, he began to draw to a close with the timely remark—

"An' neow, O Lord! as we're not to be *heerd* fur eour much, long or loud speakin'-ah," when his voice sank from a shout to a whisper, in which tone the prayer was finished.

Lindy heard little of the prayer. She knew the latter part of it by heart. She was accustomed to hear prayers which ended in almost the same words, with the same variations of pitch, stress and inflection, and with the drop from the fortissimo to the inaudible on exactly the same word. The tune of "Amazing grace" was running through her mind, and she heard Brother Simmons alternately lining and singing—

*"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be."*

But after the prayer, came another hymn which helped her somewhat, for it was not "sung to the use of common maisure;" and it set to rest for a time the jingle in her brain.

"O sisters, aint you happy, aint you happy in the Lord?

Shout glory, hally, hallyloo!

"Yes, ef ever I was happy, I'm happy in the Lord,

Shout glory, hally, hallyloo!"

Refrain:

"O religion is a fortyin and heaving is a home,
Shout glory, hally, hallyloo!
When we all git to heaving we'll shout together there,
Shout glory, hally, hallyloo!"

Lindy tried to sing, but could not. She was *not* happy. She wondered if the "sisters" were. With a vague feeling of unrest she sat with her head down, trying not to think.

And now Brother Ab Duncan rose to speak, and cast his eyes over his congregation. An interesting one it certainly was. There sat the brethren in rough homespun, some with coats, but more without, with elbows on their knees. Their eyes were sometimes raised to look at the speaker or to gaze behind them—the latter effort being accompanied by a falling of the lower jaw—but generally fixed listlessly on the puddle of tobacco-juice between their feet.

There were the women in their linsey-woolsey dresses. Some were using the turkey wings with which they had come provided; for, while the nights are cool even in summer, the days are warm in late autumn on No Bus'ness. To-day was especially so, and those women who had no turkey-wings, bent their paw-paw riding whips double, and stretched their red neckerchiefs over them for fans. And some fanned

rapidly, with a quick, nervous motion, and others—staid, stout matrons—gently flapped their fans against their bosoms, and looked upward, at an angle of forty-five degrees. Some took off their sunbonnets and laid them across their laps, and these invariably exposed a twist of hair with the end protruding at a tangent; for hair-pins are unknown on No Bus'ness, and there is a limit to the ability of the back comb.

Many of the women, as well as men, used tobacco. Conspicuous among them were two girls, who sat well forward and evidently thought themselves leading the singing. While the song, "O sisters aint you happy," was singing, they removed their snuff sticks, and gave the song their exclusive attention. But they had to expectorate once a stanza, and feeling that both must not stop at once, they alternated;—the taller one taking her intermission at the end of the stanza, the shorter one at the end of the refrain. And the tall one was an adept at the business. She shot her mouthfuls of discolored saliva from the end of her tongue with wonderful precision of aim, striking with each discharge, a bench leg diagonally across the aisle, where it drained down, making a puddle of more than medium size.

But Brother Duncan is beginning to preach.

There he stands, a rather heavy set man, with a face like a pugilist and a voice like a young lion. His text is, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness," but his sermon would apply equally well to any other passage of Scripture. He begins with a long-winded prelude concerning himself.

"My brethering, I thank God that my jeens coat haint never breshed the dust orfum nary college wall. All the trainin' I've got fur ter be a preacher, God gin me. An' wen God trains a man fur ter preach, he makes him a preacher *right*. An' I'm as morril a man as ever you seed, I reckon. An' nobody over whar I live on Lynn Camp won't go afore the court an' swear as ever he seed Ab Duncan so drunk but wot he cud get home."

Then he goes to the twelfth chapter of Revelation and talks about the woman astannin' on the moon-ah! then begins at the creation and takes in with a tremendous sweep, the fall of man, the exodus, the birth of Christ, and the conversion of Saul. Then he returns to the Apocalypse and the woman, with much repetition and increased lung power. His face streams with perspiration, and his tone is a veritable bray; hardly a word of what he says being understood. As he approaches his perora-



BROTHER AB. DUNCAN.

tion, he holds out his gorilla face, with eyes blood-shot and every pore dripping, and while proceeding to wipe it with his red handkerchief, says:—

“Jes’ look at my face! Do you ’spose I could look this away ef I warnt a Christain? Oh! ef thishyur aint religion I dunno wut ’tis!”

He concludes with a graphic picture of the Day of Judgment, having not once directly or indirectly alluded to his text.

Space will not permit the insertion of the profound discourses of Brethren Hopkins, Simmons, Albright and the others, all of whom preached. Brother Jones, of Laurel County, laid on the cap sheaf, or as he expressed it, “laid up the top rails.”

“I mos’ giner’ly alers notice,” he began, “wen they’s a big meetin’ an’ I’m thar, they mos’ giner’ly alers calls on me last—I may say fur to lay up the top rails. An’ I alers see them that’s been scattered round in the woods comes up—comes nearer ter hear me. Neow, I’m agwine fur ter be brief on this occasion, fur the congregation has been right smartly worried a’ready. An’ you’ll fine my tex—Hole on! I caint never preach ’th my coat on.”

Off came his coat, and as he warmed to the

subject he slipped his knit suspenders (attached to his trousers by little hickory sticks in lieu of buttons) from off his shoulders, rolled up his sleeves, unbuttoned his shirt at the neck, exposing his hairy chest, held his left hand on his ear, and gesticulated wildly with his right, raced up and down like a chained maniac, spitting right and left, and singing his incoherent sentences in a tone of thunder. The only intelligible portion of a sentence in the latter part of it was that he "would rather be a pine-knot in hell" than something. And then he called for a song and invited those who so desired to come forward to the mourners' bench; and while they sang, he exhorted and threatened and bellowed in a tone audible above the voices of the whole congregation. Then followed a prayer for the mourners, during which some of the latter "got the power," and then Brother Albright opened the doors of the church.

"An' neow awhilest we sing, all them as wants ter jine the ole Hardshell Babtist Church, come for'ard. Give me yer hand an' the Lord yer heart an' take yer seat on thishyur front bainch."

Tom stood and watched the candidates go forward, Lindy among them. Just as the last stanza was finished, to the surprise of the whole

congregation and himself, Tom walked up the aisle, took his seat on the end of the bench, and buried his face in his hands.

He had not fully considered this step or he would not have taken it. He had always intended in an indefinite sort of way to be a Christian sometime, but was totally in the dark as to what constitutes a Christian life. Since last night he had experienced an unusual feeling, which had grown upon him with his plan to leave home—an all-alone feeling, and he wanted a Friend. Everything was dark about him when the sudden impulse seized him to take a step with the others; and his blind step was toward the sun-rise. Perhaps it was only an impulse; perhaps it was the Divine Spirit. But it was more than the instantaneous flash of a sudden desire; it was the firing of his whole being, which had long, unknown to him, been ready for the spark of a crisis to kindle within him the flame of a right decision.

The candidates proceeded to give their experience. Most of them had had a hard struggle before they had "got through," and some were positive that they never could have succeeded but for the appearance of some dream or vision. One old woman had seen the devil.

"Wunct he come to me in the shape of a

yalligator, an' wunct he come to me in the shape of the shadow of a big yaller dog. 'N' I tole him '*Go way! Yer caint hev me!*' An' then I jes' made up my mind *I'd pray!*'

"Mighty wise resolution, sister," interrupted Brother Albright.

"An' so I prayed an' prayed twell I got through, an' now I wouldn't take nothin' for the hope I've got. Oh! I wouldn't swap hit fur ten thousand sech worlds as thishyur."

Old Samson Walsh and his wife were received. Their experiences were somewhat alike. Mrs. Walsh—

"War a washin' dishis in the porch, an' they come a leetle bird an' sot on a hollyhock bush in the yaird 'n' sung: '*Lucee-ee thy sins 'r' forgiven thee-ee.*' 'N' then it flew up ter heaving asingin', '*Lucee-ee foller me-e-e!*'"

And old Samson said: "Wull, I went out to the backer house an' went ter strippin' backer. 'N' I got ter thinkin' 'bout my speritool condition, 'n' 'twas mighty bad. 'N' they come a leetle bird an' sot on a stalk o' backer an' sez, sez she, 'Samson, thy sins air forgiven thee,'" and noticing an incredulous grin on the faces of some of the young men, he added with more earnestness than piety: "'N' b' golly, I believe hits so!"

Lindy's experience was very brief and low. She had alers wanted to be a Christian, 'an now she b'lieved she was one, an' she hoped they'd all pray for her that she might be a better one. Some questions were asked her to which she answered "Yes, sir," without any very definite understanding of their meaning.

Old Jim Hanson had had a heap o' dreams, 'n' he'd tole 'em to a heap o' preachers, 'n' they'd tole him them was jest as purty dreams as any person ever had, 'n' that he had ort to jine the church. An' he'd studied a heap about it, 'n' concluded he war agittin' old an' warn't stout nohow an' mought die anytime amost, an' he reckoned mebbey he'd best jine.

All this time Tom sat appalled at his rash act. He really wished himself back again.

"But hits too late ter crawfish on 'er now," he thought. "I've got hit ter do."

When asked for his experience he replied:

"I haint got none."

"But, brother," remonstrated Brother Albright, "whut did ye come for'ard fur ef yer haint got no experunce?"

"I dunno. To *git* a experunce, I reckon."

"You had orter a stayed out twill you got it," said Brother Duncan.

"I've bin a stayin out a right smart while

an' haint no nearder a gittin' a experunce nor I was afore," said Tom, his power of speech returning as his combativeness was aroused by this unexpected opposition.

"Well, brother," said Brother Albright, "then s'pos'n' ye jes sorter tell us how ye feel."

"Well," said Tom rising, "I didn't really expect ter come for'ard, 'n' I dunno wy I did; ony jes I wanter be a Christian an' I didn't know what else ter do. The Bible sez ter make straight in the wilderness the way of the Lord, but 'pears to me like the way you fellers blaze out is a powerful crooked un. I caint git inter hit, 'pears like. The Bible sez, 'Blessed air them as hungers an' thirstis atter righteousness 'n' they shall be filled.' I've ben a comin' hyur tolable reg'lar an' I'm a hungerin'. The Bible sez fur you ter 'Feed my sheep,' 'n' I reckon I'm the ninety-ninth un as stayed away. But you don't do it. You fellers jes' tole me along through the woods, a makin' a powerful big noise a rattlin' the corn in the maisure, but only a shellin' me off now and then a grain, an' never givin' me nary decent bite. An' I'm mighty nigh a starvin'. I've been a studyin' 'bout it off an' on fur a right smart spell, 'n' p'tic'lar since yistidy. I hadn't no notion o' comin' for'ard, but when the rest come, 'peared

like I wanted to too, fur I want to be a Christian as bad as any of 'em, an' need it, I reckon, a heap wuss 'n' ary one on 'em. An' I was a stannin' thar, 'n' they come a feelin' sorter sudden like that mebbly ef I'd come this fur, I cud see the way round ter the next bend in the road, 'n' I jes' come. An' I'm willin' ter be *baptized* er ter jine—I haint a keerin' now wut ye do with me, but I wanter know wut 'tis fur to be a Christian, 'n' I want ter *be* it."

Tom sat down breathless, and again covered his face. A pause followed his speech, so eloquent in its desperation and sudden earnestness. Brother Duncan was not altogether satisfied with Tom's experience.

"Tworn't speritool nuff," he said half aloud. "Hit don' do no good fur to *baptize* a feller as haint bin changed. We haint no Campbellites. Water don' change a feller; ony jes' yer put him down a dry devil an' fotch him up a wet devil."

After a moment Brother Albright rose, blew his nose, and said:

"Wull, I haint sure but they's some words o' truth in wut the brother's bin a sayin'. We've bin a tryin' fur ter feed him on the Bread o' Life, but 'pears like he haint got nuthin' but huskis. I dunno's I orter *baptize* ye, Brother

Baker, but I'll resk it. The Bible sez, 'Him thet's weak in the faith receive ye,' so I reckon I'll resk it. An' neow, less have 'nother hyme, an' awhilest we sing, we want the prayin' part of this congregation to come for'ard an' extend the right hand o' congratulation to those new members."

Then they sang, "I am bound for the promised land," and the whole congregation shook hands with the new members and the preachers and each other, and the meeting adjourned to the creek. Down the narrow road the congregation crowded, many rushing along paths and through nigh-cuts to secure favorable positions. Part of the way Tom walked with Lindy, but they exchanged only a word or two. But how happy Lindy felt, that the barrier between Tom and herself was down.

Old Mrs. Walsh was first baptized. She shouted in the water, and as she came up, broke from Brother Albright and rushed to the bank, where two or three old sisters met and embraced her. When old Samson was baptized, she rushed into the water to meet him, splashing, struggling, hugging him affectionately and shouting vociferously. Others delivered little speeches, carefully prepared for the occasion, in a manner intended to appear extemporaneous.

When it was over, Brother Albright came to the water's edge and standing ankle deep in the stream, called for appointments. Brother Duncan announced the meeting in the Seed-Tick school-house on the head waters of Hiwassy; Brother Simmons "norated" meeting on Red Bird the fourth Saturday and Sunday, and the funeral of old Aunt Sally Berry at the graveyard below Preacher Jake Wattses on Bull Creek on the second Saturday and Sunday of next month. Thus "all minds were discharged," and at four o'clock P. M. Brother Albright "craved the benediction," and the Big Meetin' on No Bus'ness wound up.

V.

Lindy felt better after the meeting had ended, Tom, she felt sure, would be over early in the week, and the whole matter would now be adjusted to their mutual satisfaction. Marriages in the mountains are speedily consummated when once decided upon, and Lindy built her air-castle high. They would live with Tom's parents for awhile, until Tom could get a little clearing started on a corner of his father's farm, and then she and Tom would be alone together. A little cabin with a single room and a stick chimney, two chairs, a bed and a pine table—to this giddy altitude did she erect her aerial edifice.

But Tom had no such thoughts. He had no conception of the reason for his rejection. Girls as conscientious as Lindy are rare on No Business—and everywhere else. The rain began Sunday night, and next morning Dan, Tom and others left with the log rafts, floating down with the "tide."

Down, down the creek and into a larger one full to the tops of its banks with a dark, muddy

angry looking liquid; out on the rapid, swollen river; down, down between high cliffs, and through the narrow gorge in Pine Mountain; down, still down, landing and breaking up the rafts to let the logs go singly over the falls, then catching and re-fastening them below,—down, on down, the river growing wider as they descended, until the logs were safely locked in the boom at Jonesborough.

Tom landed, pocketed his scanty wages and walked through the large mills, staring at the large gang-saws, whose motion shook the whole building, and looking on all sides of himself before taking a step, lest he should fall into a saw or be caught in a belt. He went to the incline and watched the logs as they were drawn up from the river into the mill, and then walked out into the lumber yard. A man with a book and measuring stick seemed to be giving orders there. Tom watched him a while and then approached him with—

“Say, mister, hev you got all the men you want?”

“I don’t know,” replied the man, “step into the office yonder and inquire.”

The man at the desk looked up as Tom entered, and waited for him to tell his business.

"Hev you got work for ary 'nother hand?" asked Tom.

"What can you do?"

"I kin do a'most anything that takes jist muscle, I reckon, and learn a'most anything as takes more'n that."

"Elliot!" called the man in the office through the window to the man with whom Tom had just spoken, "has Smith got over his drunk yet?"

"Guess not. He hasn't put in an appearance this morning."

"Do you need a man in his place?"

"Yes, we can use another one stacking lumber for a day or two anyhow."

So Tom secured a temporary place, which afterwards became permanent, and he rose gradually on his lumber-stack and in the esteem of the yard-boss, who found him strong, active, intelligent, willing and punctual. Tom's desire to learn led him to ask many questions which showed how little he knew of the world; but the answers were so carefully remembered that he seldom appeared ignorant twice on the same subject; and much of his verdancy and mountain dialect wore off as time wore on.

Sunday came. Tom heard the bells ringing and saw some of the two thousand people of Jones-

borough going, as he learned, to church; but as none of the mill-hands in the shanty where he boarded went, and the people who seemed to be going were better dressed than himself, Tom stayed in the shanty. He had a desire to go, but thought he would better wait and learn more about it. Meeting here and on No Bus'ness were evidently different things.

But in the afternoon the boys in the shanty shaved and dressed up a little, and invited him to go with them to Sunday-school. In a former mule-shed near the mills, the crowd assembled. The house, though rough was clean, and the walls were papered with pictures illustrating past Sunday school lessons. Most of those present were mill-hands and their families, and Tom did not feel ashamed of his clothes, for many were no better dressed than himself. Soon there came from the town a man and woman in a buggy, bringing with them a portable organ. Tom listened with interest to the opening exercises, and when placed in a class with other young men, many of whom he had met at the mill, he felt quite at home. The class was taught by the yard-boss of the mill. Tom listened attentively to every question and answer. The short hour of service soon passed, and Tom was decidedly sorry when the end came.

The organ was a great curiosity to him. While the last hymn was singing he walked half way up the aisle to hear it. Some of the hands laughed at him afterwards, but Tom said:

"Hit war a new wrinkle on my horn. I wanted to git to whar I could see the little thing a squawkin."

He determined to sit further forward next Sunday to see the "little thing" manipulated. In so doing he attracted the attention of the conductor, who, at the close, spoke to him and invited him to the meeting in the Front street church at night. He felt much less at home there, but enjoyed the singing; and some things in the sermon did him good.

Tom bought some school books and borrowed others, and with the assistance of one of his fellow laborers, advanced considerably in his studies. After a while he bought a suit of store clothes, and looked as well in them on Sundays as the hero of a story ought. He became a regular attendant at the Front street church; and each month won him many new friends. Daily he grew in knowledge, and learned lessons of practical Christianity.

Mr. Elliott, the yard boss, considered him his right hand man, and trusted him more and more;

and in six months, on Mr. Elliott's recommendation, Tom was promoted and his wages raised. Mr. Elliott saw in Tom the making of a noble man. Gladly he assisted him in his lessons, and especially in the study of the Bible. He took him to his home and introduced him to Mrs. Elliott, a kind, lively little woman, who treated Tom in a manner half motherly, half sisterly, and withal very pleasant to Tom.

But there were times when Tom felt a nameless sadness. Hard as he tried to forget Lindy, to reproach her, to cease to care for her, not a day passed in which he did not think of the pleasant hours he had spent with her before the Big Meeting on No Bus'ness. At length he decided that she must by this time be the wife of Sam Sanders, and that he did not care. But there remained in his heart a very tender place where his affection for Lindy had once been.

If Tom, who tried, could not forget Lindy, much less could Lindy, who did not try, forget Tom. -

Every one on No Bus'ness was surprised when Tom left; and their surprise was doubled when Dan Walker and his crowd returning, reported that Tom had secured a position in Jonesborough and was going to stay. Mrs. Hale was especially puzzled.

"Lindy," she asked, "what's the hardness atwixt you an' Tom?"

"I never knowed as they *wair* no hardness," replied Lindy, evasively.

"Haint ye done had no quarrelin'?" asked her mother.

"No," answered Lindy briefly.

Mrs. Hale wanted to ask more, but forbore lest she should reveal the curiosity she felt. She merely remarked that hit was mighty quare. That gals nowadays didn't know their own minds. Hyur Lindy had druv off Tom Baker, as stiddy a young feller as they was on the creek, and couldn't tell wy she done hit. Gals was gittin' mighty p'tic'lar wen they wanted better fellers 'n' Tom Baker. But thet was the way—go through the woods and cut a crooked stick at las'.

But as Lindy held her peace, the old lady changed her opinion.

"No, hit caint be thet away," she said to herself. "Lindy thinks a heap o' Tom, an' Tom thinks right smart o' Lindy. Tom's jest went down thar fur to yarn him a leetle grain o' money to start on, an' he'll come back in a few months an' marry Lindy."

Nothing had occurred to remove this impression, when one afternoon almost a year

after Tom's departure, Tom himself, well dressed, rode up the creek and alighted at 'Lijah's post-and-railing.

"Wy Tom Baker! Laws a massy ef it taint you," exclaimed Mrs. Hale, wiping her hand on her apron before extending it. "Law, law! Wy yer face looks familiar but yer cloe's is plum like Sam Sanderses. Well, well! Take a cheer an' se' down. Yes; all tol'able well. The ole man's pestered right smart with the rheumatiz an' I've got the newralgy powerful bad. Ole Tom Sawyers has got the eyeresypilus, an' ole Aunt Sally Gilreath is a dyin' of a cayncer an' they're a havin' the whoopin'-cough mighty bad up on Difficulty, an' the sore eyes has broke eout in the school; an' Joe Jones is sick—the doctor sez he's got the scrofulo. An' corn haint no 'count, an' the mast is light; an' I dremp't last night o' combin' my head an' a fin'-in' lice, an' that's a sign o' sickness. They's ben a sight o' trouble sence you lef'. But whar ye ben, Tom?" she asked, not because she had told all the news, but for once was more anxious to listen than to talk.

Tom told her of his success. "An' I reckon you've come back to marry Lindy an' settle down on No Bus'ness agin, hey?"

"I—I haint a goin' to stay," stammered Tom.

"I come up to brand some logs the company's got up in here, and see to getting them floated down when the tide comes."

Mrs. Hale saw his blush and understood it, as she would have understood any act, as an acknowledgment of his intention to marry Lindy. "An' so you'll tote Lindy way off down the river. An' me a gittin' old, an' Jinny no 'count fur to do housework, an' sickness a comin'—law! law!" and thus she went on.

"Where is Lindy at?" asked Tom.

"She's gone up the creek to her Aunt Betty's. Don't be in a resh, Tom. Hit's a couple o' hours b' sun yit. Stay 'n' hev supper, an' lift yer saddle 'n' put out yer nag." But Tom said he must be getting home.

Lindy's Aunt Betty lived on Troublesome, and Tom's best road was up Difficulty, but he concluded to take the Troublesome road. There wasn't much difference, nohow, he persuaded himself.

He pondered the old lady's words. Lindy wasn't married. He had feared she would be—expected to find her so, though he had professed to himself not to care. It was evident that he had decided too hastily about Sam Sanders.

"I'll try her again," he thought. "No, I

won't either," he debated, "once is enough. —But maybe now, just *maybe* it might be different this time. No harm to try, anyway. Yes, I will—But no. Anyway, I don't believe I will. I hope I'll meet her on the road. I'll just say, 'Howdy,' and ride by, and see how she takes it."

He decided to ride slowly that he might be more certain to meet her returning; but found himself constantly touching his horse with the spur. He saw a sun-bonnet ahead—yes, it was Lindy's, a turn in the road revealed her coming toward him. Tom's heart beat faster and his face flushed more deeply with each step of his horse. They were very near before Lindy recognized him. Then suddenly her face lighted up with a look which Tom saw and understood in spite of her quick effort to hide it. He did not say "Howdy" and ride on, but dismounted and walked back with her. They said little—there was little need for words, as hand in hand, after the mountain fashion for lovers, they descended the road on the creek bank through the reddening foliage of the early autumn. And Tom stayed at 'Lijah Hale's for supper.

Tom went back to Jonesborough a happy man, and quietly made some arrangements. A

little box-house of two rooms near the mill has been rented and plainly furnished, and is to be occupied about Christmas week. And Lindy is to have her geography and grammar, and attend, for the present, the Jonesborough school.

It would be pleasant, if it were possible, to bring prophesy in where history stops, and describe the mental and spiritual growth of Tom and Lindy in their new situation. But here we must leave them, believing that if we ever meet them again, we shall discern in their life, signs of gratifying progress since the Wind-Up of the Big Meetin' on No Bus'ness.

POSTSCRIPT.

The author ventures to hope that his little story has roused in the reader more than a passing interest in the people of the Cumberland Mountains. Shut in from contact with the world, destitute of railroads and navigable streams, progress has gone around them; and though now somewhat rapidly improving in places, they are still destitute of many advantages.

They were loyal to the nation in its dark hours, and the nation owes them a debt of gratitude. The American Missionary Association to the extent of its ability, is extending to them the advantages of better schools and churches. In this endeavor it deserves the support, not simply of a denomination, but of all friends of charity and justice.

To the kind-hearted mountain folk the author is indebted for unnumbered acts of hospitality and friendship. With feelings of kindness and gratitude only, he looks back upon his life among them.

The oddities of mountain character are nowhere more prominent than in their meetings; and no attempt has been made in the story to soften down the mingling of the sublime and the ridiculous which sometimes appears in them, under the leadership of the more ignorant preachers. It is hoped that no reader will regard this story as evidence of any desire on the part of the author to ridicule or treat lightly the religious sentiment of the mountaineer, which is deep-seated and generally sincere, however odd or even uncouth the form of its expression.

Berea College, Kentucky, and the A. M. A. are sending teachers and missionaries into this region. Berea has educated many young mountaineers who must otherwise have grown up in ignorance; and scores of her students spend their summer vacations teaching the mountain schools. Her work is far-reaching, and of inestimable value.

The Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society, also, is doing admirable work, both independently and in connection with the work of the American Missionary Association. There is probably no missionary society which makes a dollar go further in its noble work of saving souls.

The author takes the liberty of appending the names of officers who will gladly give information concerning, or receive aid for, this work:

Rev. M. E. Strieby, 56 Reade St., N. Y., Rev. J. E. Roy, 151 W. Washington St., Chicago, Secretaries of the A. M. A.; Rev. A. E. Dunning, Secretary Congregational S. S. and Pub. Society, Congregational House, Boston; P. D. Dodge, Secretary and Treasurer Berea College, Berea, Ky.

There is no better way of lending to the Lord than by assisting either of these objects. Much has been done, much is now in progress, but there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.

THE AUTHOR.

OLD MAN KLINE.

I.

The road traversed by Daniel Boone on his migration into Kentucky has always been an important thoroughfare. By no possible route could the old pioneer have made his way so easily to the blue-grass region as by the one he blazed out through the pathless wilderness. Before him as he approached it, rose the Cumberland Mountain like an impenetrable wall, with one deep depression at Cumberland Gap. From here the road passes down the river, winding back and forth, not always on its bank, but keeping its general direction and seeking out the most level course to the blue-grass. After the War the state established toll gates upon it, and charged toll of all travelers who did not reside in the county in which was located the particular gate through which they passed. One of the gates, located at Bone Lick in the county

of Polk, was tended by Joseph Kline. Each year he paid the state a stipulated sum for and in consideration of which, he was permitted to practise his legal highway robbery.

Old Man Kline was a mystery. He came into the county and state aforesaid—and so far as the people of said county and state knew, into the world—soon after the War. Where he had previously lived, if at all, no one knew. Whether he came to Bone Lick from up the river or down, no one could tell. Some one had said of him :

“I reckon he’s sorter lack Melchis’deck an’ haint got nary father nur mother.”

This idea rather appealed to the credulity of the people near Bone Lick ; and though they probably believed that back in the dim distance somewhere, the new comer had been born of parents essentially human, the idea was indefinite, and he was frequently called Melchis’deck. Doubting, however, whether the old man might like his new appellation, and no one caring to account to him as its author, they used it with discre-

tion, and generally referred to him simply as "Old Man Kline."

He never spoke of a former home in No'th C'liny or Ole V'ginny. He gave no hint of having lived "Below" or "Beyond the Gap." Some believed that he was an ex-planter whose home had been lost in the War. Others, that he had escaped from some other state where he was wanted for crime. But no one had any reasonable ground for even a conjecture. He came on the same day that the Postmaster received a letter from the Polk county representative in the Legislature giving notice of the new law establishing the toll gate, and began at once to build a cabin at the forks of the road. Opposite the house he set up a crotch in which was a long pole to draw down across the road. How he erected his house alone was also considered a mystery; for he asked and received no assistance. When it was almost finished there appeared on the scene a small boy and a smaller girl, which children Old Man Kline took in and treated as his own. But where had they all come from? The establishment of the

gate was a small matter, since the people near it were exempt from toll ; but the mysterious gate-keeper was by no means a small matter. In every possible way they tried to learn something about his past, but without success. Some spoke of mobbing him, but as there appeared no better reason for so doing than the fact that he minded his own business and expected others to do likewise, no one attempted it. Men have been mobbed, probably, for that reason, but Old Man Kline was not one of them. In all the years he lived in the settlement, no hint was dropped which gave any more light on the question. For aught that the people could prove, the Act of the Legislature which created the toll-gate gave birth to Old Man Kline. And though other old men grew older year by year, and Old Man Kline's children grew from childhood to manhood and womanhood, Old Man Kline never seemed to change. Old Man Kline he was when he first appeared to the people of this story, and Old Man Kline he remained.

Yet Old Man Kline was not without

honor in his new country. He distilled the best whisky that Bone Lick had ever known : and long after the revenue officers had hunted down most of the stills in Polk county, people continued to find whisky, which was commonly believed to come from Old Man Kline. The limestone ledge on which the toll gate stood was honey-combed with caves, in one of which it was commonly reported, the old man kept his still. And thus having the county in a measure dependent on him, Old Man Kline was as surly as he chose to be, and was held in awe accordingly ; the more so because though he was seldom known to show even ursine amiability, he had never shown at Bone Lick what was conjectured to be the limit of his depravity, if it had a limit ; and therefore, as a certain deep hole in Moccasin Creek whose bottom had never been touched by any fish pole in the settlement was thought to have no bottom, and was avoided by swimmers as a place mysterious and dangerous, Old Man Kline was supposed to be capable of more mischief than he had been known to perpetrate, and no one was

rash enough to assign a limit to his capacity for revenge or hatred.

"W'a' dye reckon Old Man Kline'd do ef sumun 'us ter fotch them rev'nue fellers onter his still?" was the standing sphnix-question in the settlement. Widow Orwig had once attempted to answer it:

"W'y, I just reckon he'd fine eout the uns thet done it, an' he'd skulp 'em, an' tormaint 'em lack the Injins done, an' burn 'em, an' peck the'r eyes eout, an' kill em—'an I don't reckon he'd har'ly stop then."

The whole company appeared to accept this statement for substance of doctrine. And it is probable that the catalogue of specific possible inhumanities appealed to their imagination with far less effect than the indefinite but more terrible, "An' I don't reckon he'd har'ly stop then." To this article of faith all it may be presumed assented; and one old woman whose knowledge of spells and witches made her testimony almost that of an expert in mysterious cases said concerning the whole conjecture of widow Orwig,

"Well, I wouldn't putt it nary grain apast him."

But to Ireny Jane, his daughter, and to her friend Bettie Nye, Old Man Kline was always kind. A year before the opening of this story, by which time Ireny Jane and Bettie were eighteen or thereabouts, the whole settlement was set in a whirr of surprise by his presenting to Bettie a live turtle the size of a silver quarter. Ireny Jane had one which her father had caught for her, and Bettie passing the gate was saluted in the road by Ireny Jane who exhibited her treasure, for which Bettie, not having seen one so small, expressed unbounded admiration. The gift of the turtle's counterpart, direct from Old Man Kline next day surprised Bettie and all the people on the creek ; for it was the first kind act Old Man Kline had ever been known to do. And as Bettie remained a firm friend of Ireny Jane, Old Man Kline remained a firm friend of Bettie.

This apparent hatred of humanity in general, focused against the widow Orwig in particular. Three years before, Sophia

Orwig had married Hezekiah Kline, and that without the consent of Hezekiah's father, who firmly believed that "The widder sot her up ter do it." That Hezekiah had anything to do about it, Old Man Kline never stopped to consider; and he hated the Orwigs accordingly. It was the ponderous uncertainty which constantly hung over her that led the widow in considering the possible consequences of betraying the secret of the still, to heap together all the cruelties familiar in her youth from tales of Indian warfare, and still leave a liberal margin of uncertainty for his diabolical ingenuity, which no one would "putt a grain apast him."

Sophia had died, however about a year ago, and the bitterness in Old Man Kline's mind might possibly have become somewhat mollified, but for the fear that Hezekiah would marry M'riah Ann Orwig, which Hezekiah promptly proceeded to do. Old Man Kline was never known to say a word about it. He did not curse, as he had done before, but simply concentrated his wrath and hermetically sealed it within

himself, waiting, as people believed, for the proper time to manifest his vengeance in a manner better suited to his demoniacal rage. But Hezekiah dared not go to his father's house. And no member of the Orwig family had passed the toll-gate since the wedding, but crossed the mountain at the Blue Gap, and made their egress by way of Goose Creek.

His only joy now was his daughter, Ireny Jane. That he might ever need to give her up as he had given up Hezekiah, the old man never dreamed. Yet people whispered that Jake Orwig, the widow's son, "was atalkin' to her on the sly." Sly he must have been, if he eluded the old man, who could detect the approach of a revenue officer for miles. Perhaps the mote in his own eye prevented his seeing the beam in his daughter's; for down in his hard, strangled, little heart, Old Man Kline loved Bettie Nye. It was a foolish fancy, certainly. No one on the creek, not even Bettie, the only person outside his own home to whom he had ever been kind, suspected such a thing. That he was capa-

ble of loving anyone, even his own flesh and blood, would probably have been disputed by two-thirds of his neighbors. Even his affection for Ireny Jane was of a sneaking sort—he acted ashamed of it. It is doubtful whether he would ever have spoken of his regard for Bettie: he never did so, certainly, and no man knows it to this day, except the reader of this story. It was foolish, but it showed a tender place in a heart that had too few such spots.

II.

Hezekiah Kline did not return to his father's house. After living a few weeks with the widow Orwig, during which time no one had heard the old man utter a word regarding his son, the uncertainty concerning his father's conduct became insufferable, and Hezekiah prepared to leave Bone Lick. Having sold his horse and his yoke of steers, he packed up his few personal effects and started for Texas. But before he left he was informed by Jake of the state of affairs existing between himself and Ireny Jane, and promised to write concerning his own success, and the advisability of Jake's following him.

In due time, the old mail horse which had traveled semi-weekly over the road between Barborsville and the Gap since the earliest recollection of the oldest inhabitant, carrying the rusty, flapping, almost empty

.

mail-bag, brought a letter for Jake. Jake examined it, front and back, with deliberation and curiosity mingled. It was the event of its kind in his life-time. He opened it on the way home, and spent an hour trying to read it, and was reasonably successful, but so much of the writer's meaning was left in doubt that Jake was constrained to take the letter across the mountain to Squire Jimmison.



JAKE.

"Howdy, Jake," said the squire, after calling off the dogs and setting a chair for

his guest. "Wat sort of a case be ye goin' fur ter bring 'fore the court? Must be suthin pressin' ter fotch ye 'cross hyur. I haint seed ye fur six weeks. 'Lowd you'd iurgot whar we lived, an' hadn't no idy I cud git ye over hyur 'thout sendin' a writ atter ye. Take a cheer."

"Jake's had bus'ness nigher ter hum, I reckon," interposed the squire's wife. "Keeps ye busy, don't hit, Jake, ter git a chance ter see her when the ole man haint watchin'? I 'low anybody that wants ter git ahead of Ole Man Kline haint got much time ter waste. He's got ter tend right ter his knittin' ef he ketches that ole weasel asleep,"

Jake took the sally in good part, and after some extended preliminaries, produced the letter, which the squire, slowly, and with many pauses, read.

"DISHPAN, Texas, Octob the 6.

"dere Frend jake i rite U a fue lindes for to let U no thet i ar well & hope That Thes fue lindes Will find U injoying the same. we ar all Well Mariar ann & me included we got this far on our Way in pece & ar go-

ing on 23 miles in to the country for to see how we like hit. i Tell U jake folkes thet stayes round ole bone lick dont no what they misses by them not a coming hear. if They was to no what craps they could make in Texas they wouldent stay Round ole bone lick no More they is more Corn on i aker hear than in All Polk county. only the emmigrants takes hit powerful nex the Big rodes—”

“Hole on,” interrupted Jake, stopping the slow and painful process of reading, “they’s somethin’ I don’ adzackly understan’. Wut is a emmy—emmy—what did he call ’er?”

“Emmigrant,” answered Squire Jimmison, dubiously, wiping his face after his exertion of deciphering Hezekiah’s hieroglyphics, “emmigrant.”

“What’s a emmigrant?” asked Jake.

Jimmison thoughtfully rubbed the bald spot on his head, and supplied his definition from the context.

“A emmigrant,” he replied with deliberation, “is a animile sorter twixt a possum an’ a coon, an’ a pesky sight wuss on corn nor ary one on ’em.”

"They had orter git me down in thar," said Jake, "I've got the bes' lot o' dogs fur possums an' coons ever you seed; and ef they's a emmigrant ur ary other sort o' varmint thet they won't tree inside o' five minits, I'll eat my boots."

"Wouldn't do ye nary grain o' good, Jake. They got claws lack er painter—I never seed one, an' don' wanter, but I've heerd tell about 'em a heap o' times. They got claws lack a painter, an' teeth lack a bar. They haint so powerful big, but they fight lack a catamount, an'—an'—." Here he began to feel that he had been wise beyond what was written, and avoided any possible defeat by retiring within the intrenchments of his former statement, repeating—

"An' they go fur the corn wussun a coon ur possum ary one."

"What else do he say?"

"—nex the Big rodes. i want U to come hear just as Soon as U kan i will rite to U when I git to whar i am going. jest Sell All U have got till U get enough fur to come hear on & give The rest Away U

wont never nead hit hear if i hadent a been
a Fool i would have come hear long Ago.
Tell my pap howdy an i am Well, & doant
be Mad for hit wont do no Good. Tell
every one of my Frens in ole Polk howdy
fur me an Tell them if they want to git
rich not to stay thar No longer but come to
Texas it is the place for a pore man. so No
More at present from yure Frend

hezekiah kline.

rite soon.

p. s. excuse mistakes.

"Is that all?" asked Jake.

"That's all, Jake," said Jimmison somewhat relieved. "That's the whole of it, Jacob. The state rests her case here. An' further the deponent sayeth not. What's the verdick Jake?"

"Wull, I've heerd a heap about Texas, an' I've alers wanted to go thar. By doggies, I b'lieve I'll go out thar yit."

"I would'nt do it, Jake. I would'nt do it, Jake. I wouldn't, not ef it was me. Now you mought, but I tell you, Jake, hones' an' fair, I wouldn't. The evidence looks at first like a plain case fur the plaintiff, but I

tell ye, Jake, you hain't heerd the hull on't. Now jes' look a hyur, Jake, jes' look a hyur. Did you ever know ary feller ter leave the mountings but wut he come back in two three year ef he cud raise the money ter *git* back? Kier thinks hit's mighty fine right now, but afore Spring he'll be awrit'in the ole man fur the Lord's sake ter send him some money ter feed him 'till he makes a crap, ef he don't he'll starve. Then in 'bout six months' more you'll see him comin' back a mighty sight porer nor when he went away."

"I don' know, Squire; I b'lieve they's money out thar. Jim Neely's ben out thar agoin' on two year, an' he likes hit powerful good."

"Mebby Jim Neely will stay thar agoin' on two year more, mebbby he will; but hit'll take some ev'dence to prove hit in this court. He's ben thar one season, an' thet happened to be a good one. But you wait 'till the bad uns come. Jis' you wait 'till the bad uns come. You'll see Jim and Kier both, come astreakin' in hyur so pore hit'll take both on 'em to cast a shadder. Who

ever let' hyur that didn't come back an' stay? Thar's Joe Pike; he went to Texas. An' Bill Asher he went to, to—less see. He didn't go to Texas, did he? No, you're right, 'twas Southern Eelinoy. Wull, I knowed 'twas out that away somers. An' *he's* back. An' Tom Dolittle an' his boys, they went to Injeany, an' they want to come back."

"But there's Joe Jones," suggested Jake.

"Yas, there's Joe Jones. He went off to Louisville, an' then he went to—I don't know where in thunder he did go to, but I know wen he come back hyur he was as pore as he went. W'y, he come an' stayed a month; an' the fus' week he smoked ten cent seegyars what he fetches in his pocket, an' blowed roun' at the store wen they was gone, an' he had to come down 'bout the second week to five-centers, the bes' they had hyur. He 'lowed he warn't used to it, but he reckoned he'd hatter stan' it fur a spell. But 'bout the third week his money got low, an' he come down to stogies; an' the las' week he war roun' asmokin' a cob pipe, an' a beggin' terbacker fur ter putt in

hit, an' fur him a chaw. That's right strong circumstantial ev'dence, haint it? Haint it now? W'y, ef hit had'nt aben that Joe kim hyur on a return ticket as fur as the keers fotched him, so that he got back fur nothin', he'd a ben hyur yit, kase he hadn't money fer ter git away. An' hit's a mussy he hed it, too, fur he was pin'ly spilt fur the mountings, an' no good fur nary other place, I reckon.

"No, Jake, no: Texas haint no sorter 'count. I haint never ben thar, but I've seed suthin' sorter lack it. Fourteen year ago—you warn't so big then as ye be now, Jake—I sorter got worried alivin' hyur, an' kim to the 'clusion that this hyur warn't no place fur to hold me in; an' me an' the ole woman moved to Kansas.

"We let Bill Skinner live in the house, an' I sole my hawgs to Dan Hopkins, savin' two on 'em I made inter bacon ter feed us on the way. An' Jim Hutton, wut married the ole woman's sister Polly, tuck my chickens. I had a power on 'em, Jake, a leetle the bigges' chickens ever you seed, I reckon: I shed jedge they was somers

long 'bout the size of a hostridge. W'y, one on 'em was so tall, he eenamost had ter stoop wen he come inter the door atter dinner to pick up the crumbs on the floor. W'y, I seed him one Sunday cut the quarest caper—he went out an' sot down to crow—jest sot up in the grass 'th his head up, an' crowed, an' crowed. I jes 'lowed the reason w'y he sot down ter hit war, he war so tall wen he stood up, an' lifted his head up, he got dizzy way up thar. Tell ye I war mad wen I got back an' foun' thet ole rooster war dead; fur I'd counted on it all the way hum as how Jim 'ud sell him back ter me or fight, one; but they come a quarterly meetin' moun'g the niggers, an' the chicken cholery had been mighty bad thet season, so they didn't hev no chicknes, scursly, an' they're the marster set to feed their preachers chicken. I never seed nobody cud eat chicken lack a preacher, no-how. An' p'tick'ler a Meth'dis preacher. An' spaych'ly a nigger Meth'dis preacher; though ole Squinty Dave Pemberton cud 'mighty nigh ekill a nigger wen he was p'sidin' elder. I uster 'low ef I cud eat

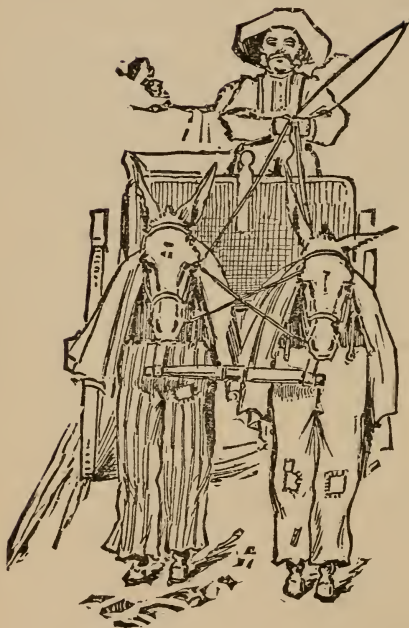
chicken lack him, I'd git me some poke berries an' black my face, an' be a sure nuff nigger.

"Wall, wen I got back from Kansas, thet ole rooster was gone. I alers laid the stealin' on him onter ole Pete 'Bednego. The ole nigger prays so allfired loud, tud be jes' lack him ter steal chickens. An' I reckon Black Abe knowed suthin' 'bout hit: fur I seed him one day atter I'd been axin' roun' bout the ole rooster, a settin' on the steps front o' Pike's a pickin' his banjer an' a singin'

'Yaller gal sweeter 'n a chicken meat,'

an' he looked at me mighty devilish outer his eyes. I did 'low ter take a day, 'n' cut me a hick'ry an' go over ter his cabin, an' pin'ly war him out; but I 'cluded hit war jes' circumstantial ev'dence, an' didn't warrant conviction, har'ly.

"Wall, I sole them chickens ter Jim, 'n' swapped my cow an' a roan steer I got over on Beeswax to a mule: an' I swapped my mar an' her mule colt to a blind mule an' 'nother cow. I sorter had an idy that thet mule couldn't see whar ter kick, bein's he



"I NEEDED THEM BREECHES MIGHTY BAD
MYSELF."

war blind; but bless yer soul, Jake, yer mought cut a spot size of a nickel in the bark of a beech tree, an' let thet mule grease his patch, an' ram his load, an' turn him loose anywhar inside er fifty yards of thet tree, an' dog my cats ef he cudn't putt his ball inter the center of thet spot every time he'd pull the trigger! I had the wust sorter time 'th them mules counter the flies: fur the blind un was mighty ticklish, an' he'd sorter stir t'other un up. Theseyer flies thet pesters yer beastis 'bout the years haint so bad out thar; an' the big fellers thet lights on a hoss an' overcomes him by main strenth—them, we cud stan': but the bott-flies is powerful bad. Every time one o' them come roun' thet blind mule, he thought hit war a bee, an' he got t'other'un ter thinkin' so, too. An' wen them flies gotter pesterin' their front laigs, hit 'peared lack hit sorter irritated their hind laigs right off. An' t'warnt prudent fur a feller ter set up thar behine 'em. I putt on fly-blankets, an' tied red strings ter their throat-latches, but thet didn't holp their laigs. An' finally, atter I got thar, I foun' out how. I jes'

tuck two ole par o' breeches an' putt on their fo'laigs. Thet fixed 'em. But I hated ter do hit, fur I needed them breeches mighty bad myself; but they warn't no other way. But I had ter drive my steers more'n I wanted to on the way—I kep' a yoke o' oxens, an' tuck 'em 'long. I dunno how I'd a got back ef I hadn't a had them. I had ter drive the oxens mostly, an' I rode one mule an' led tother 'un, an' my oldest boy druv the waggin. Sometimes I'd hitch the mules in ter spell the oxens, but mostly Zeke druv them an' I rode. Wen we come to a stream, I'd ride ahead an' fine the ford an' he'd foller. Wunct he missed the ford, an' 'peared lack the hull thing ud go down stream. Zeke, he thought hit was agoin', too, an' he jumped out onter the oxens, an' stud thar with one foot on each oxen, an' guided them through ter land. Zeke war a mighty game boy.

"Whar was I? Oh, yes! Wull, I hed some sheep, an' I swopped 'em to a waggin, 'n' I tuck my plow, 'n' saddles, 'n' wut cheers we hed; 'n' the ole woman tuck 'er spinnin' wheel, 'n' the chaps, 'n' 'er beddin'; an' I



putt in some bacon, 'n' couple o' sacks o' meal, 'n' 'bout a bar'l o' corn, 'n' ten dozen o' oats an' fodder, 'n' we overlanded it.

"An' wen we got thar, we settled in Possum Holler whar Dave Newland hed a claim. I built me a cabin on one corner of Dave's claim, an' broke up twenty acres an' putt hit inter corn on sheers. Ye haint never ben to Kansas, hev ye? Oh, no; cose not. So yer don' know whar Possum Holler is, do ye? Possum Creek runs through hit, an' all the timber they is in five

hundred miles, I reckon, is 'long thet ar creek. Yer git up on Hominy Ridge an' look off, an' yer caint see tree nur bush, only thar, an' most o' thet is on Dave's claim.

"Wull, I got the crap in, 'n' they come a rain lack the bottom ud drapped outer the sky, an' the creek riz an' washed out all my crap. Wen the groun' got dry 'nough I replanted, but hit kep wet till the new moon in June. 'Bout the full of the moon in May, we hed a fros' thet hurt hit right smart, 'n' twar powerful weedy 'n' yaller from the wet, an' fust week in June hit dried up, an' I never did see no sich drouth. Possum Creek all dried up, an' the crap rolled up, the leaves did, lack seegyars. One o' my mules strayed off ter finewarter an' never come back. Thet war the one thet could see. T'other one hed died in the spring. He got inter a slough, an' got mired, 'n' cud'nt see the way out; he gotter kickin', 'n' kicked, 'n' kicked, till I reckon he jes' kicked the bottom out o' the slough. He went down all but his years, plum out o' sight. They stuck up, fur a

gravestun, I reckon. I never did see no sech mule ter kick, but he war a mighty good un ter pull : an' he cud keep fat whar ary other beast ever I owned 'ud starved. I uster call him Jeshurun ; thet war the name he went by wen I owned him, kase the Bible says, (I caint pint ter the section o' the code thet contains thet p'tic'ler statute, but hit says hit somers) hit says thet Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked, an' I lowed thet 'plied to the case afore the court, an' I jes' called him Jeshurun.

"Wull, the weeds hed 'bout tuck my corn time o' the wet spell, but my oats 'n' taters 'n' spring wheat looked powerful good. But the wheat rusted ; an' the tater bugs tuck the arsh taters ; an' the chinch bugs ruined the oats. Wut they call chinchies in Kansas haint the kine we got hyur, thet gits inter beds, but they're death on oats. An' then come the hoppers, 'n' et every green thing, even to a green gingham sun bunnit the ole woman lef' out doors one day.

"Wull, the ole cow got the holler-horn, 'n' *she* kicked the bucket. Then, long in the fall we all got the typhoid fever, an'

two o' the chaps died. Peared lack I was ready ter die right then, fur them was the fust we'd lost, an' nobody don' know wut hit is ter lose a chile but them thet's ben thar; but I got well, 'n' so did the ole woman 'n' the rest on 'em. Jes' as I was agittin' roun' agin, I fell 'n' broke my laig: an' the doctor thet sot it didn't do hit right, 'n' I hed ter hev hit broke an' re-sot.

"Long about thet time they come a far over the prairie, an' burnt all the fences an' the barn, an' mighty nigh burnt the house. An' thet hadn't more'n went out till they come a cyclone an' lack ter blowed us all away. An' I made up my mine right then thet I'd hed 'nough o' Kansas, an' I got wut little I had lef' tergether, an' yoked up my steers an' come back."

"Wall, you ketched it mighty nigh as bad as Job, didn't ye?" asked Jake.

"Jist about. I uster study a heap about Job in them days, an' wonder how come it that my name warnt Job. My nex' brother older 'n me 's name's Job. The ole folks hed the name sorter saved up fur the nex' boy, an' I pin'ly believed they war a mis-

take somers thet I didn't come nex' an' git the name stiddier him."

"Did ye hev biles, lack Job?"

"Naw : not adzackly. All the rest o' the family hed 'em 'n' I wud a had 'em sure, but I got so thin, the bones come out ter the top o' the groun' so thick, they warnt room atween 'em nowhurs to *putt* a bile. Wull, we come back, me an' the ole woman an' the three chillen that was left, an' I reckon I'll live an' die right hyur. I tell ye Jake, they may talk about Texas, 'n' Kansas, 'n' Injeany, 'n' Cincinnati, 'n' all them places, but this country right hyur is the bes' place ever *I* struck."

But notwithstanding the Squire's sound advice, based on abundant experience, Jake determined to follow Hezekiah, and prepared with as little ado as possible to depart, and take with him Ireny Jane.

III.

This history has little occasion to speak of Bettie Nye, the pretty girl whom Old Man Kline had learned to tolerate for his daughter's sake, and later to love for her own. She was a gay, thoughtless thing, ever laughing and happy. Perhaps it was well that her youth was thus merry and untroubled, for her marriage brought care enough, and her end was sad. About the time to which this history has brought us, she married a wandering fruit-tree agent, who proved to be a drunkard and a gambler. Of lovers she had had plenty—a half-dozen or a score—it matters not; but she probably never thought or cared what any of them would say or think of her marriage. Certainly she never thought of Old Man Kline in this connection.

But we are not to deal just now with her, but with her two little sisters, Mat and Et—as interesting a pair as was ever seen.

Mat was seven years old, but Et, who was five, was bolder and more inventive, and was usually mentioned first. A pretty picture they were as they made their way unattended through the woods in search of berries or paw-paws; bare-headed and bare-footed, their brown faces aglow with excitement and their happy voices always talking—Et proposing and Mat assenting. Very small they seemed to be climbing the hills and wading the creek alone; but they never came to grief, though they had many experiences worth remembering.

One bright morning Mat and Et came in from the garden where they had been industriously digging, Et marching ahead with a tin can in her hand, talking industriously to Mat, who, following with the hoe, assented to everything Et said.

"What are you children up to now?" asked Mrs. Nye.

"Goin' fishin'," said Et. "We've got us some worms—look ahyur," and she proudly exhibited her treasure.

"I don't reckon you'll set the creek afire," replied the mother. "Don't you break

Tom's hook or he'll git atter you. Look out when you cross that foot-log—it makes me plumb nervish for you two little girls to cross that high log—your Pap hadn't ort to let you do it."

But the fact was that Mrs. Nye was very little alarmed, but felt it incumbent upon herself—good mother that she was—to have ready some admonition, and the foot-log afforded the best subject at hand. Most mothers would have felt the need of alarm—a log forty feet long and twenty feet above the water, and with no railing, did not look very safe for two little tots like Mat and Et. But they had not a particle of fear, hence were in little danger.

Et took Tom's pole from the apple tree and started ahead, leaving Mat to follow with the can. They stopped a minute in the middle of the log to "teeter" until their mother's voice warned them :

"Here! You stop teeterin' that log and go right over, or you come back to the house! You'll fall offen there some day an' break your neck 'n' be drowned," when they scampered over, and up the creek.

A little while they fished with no success, and tiring of it went in search of "a better hole," or pleasure of another kind. And, as they have thus left us, we will leave them for a while, and go to the cabin of Old Man Kline.

IV.

Old Man Kline sat this morning in his splint bottomed chair, tipped back against his cabin. An unusually large number of people passed the gate; for there was a big meeting in progress a mile down the creek. Irney Jane had gone to the meeting. Old Man Kline never went to such places; he was thought to be an infidel, and if so, was the only one in the county. He never missed an opportunity to insult a preacher



passing his gate. Many a worthy minister had looked back as he rode under the pole, and heaped Biblical maledictions on his head. A more savage, misanthropic old sinner no man ever saw than Old Man Kline as he sat in the shade of the toll-gate this October morning. Old Man Kline had little to say to the passers by; but now and then he gathered a bit of news.

Suddenly he arose from his chair with a curse, and looked with a murderous expression at a group that had just passed under his pole. They had said nothing to him; but he had gathered from their conversation as they passed that Bettie Nye was married to that tree agent. The bride and groom would be at meeting today, the women said to each other. They were married last night by one of the preachers of the meeting now in progress, and would leave soon for the blue-grass where the agent lived.

Old Man Kline rushed into his cabin and with set teeth and a grin like a lynx, took his long rifle from the wall, examined the priming, and put on a fresh cap. From

a peg driven into the wall he took his powder horn and bullet bag and slipped his head through the strap.

From his belt he took a revolver, removed the cylinder, examined the cartridges carefully, pointed the empty weapon at the head of a picture of Washington, (the cabin's sole ornament, taken in lieu of toll from a map peddler, because Ireny Jane and Bettie, who was visiting her that day, both liked it), drew a careful bead, and snapped the lock again and again.

"I'm agittin' a leetle grain old," he remarked, "an' my sight haint quite so good fur suthin' nyur as she war wunct; but on a fur range she's jest as good as ever she war, an' not so *mighty* bad on suthin' nearder, nuther."

Taking down a bottle which was suspended by a string around its neck from a peg in the wall, he oiled the locks of his weapons well with ground-hog oil; and during these operations a larger bottle several times ministered to the necessities of the old man himself. At length he corked the latter, saying :

"Thar, blast ye! No more on ye now! I'll drink so much ef I haint keerful, I'll miss him. I wonder wuts the matter with me this mornin'? Pears like I didn't never feel this away before at sech times."

Pulling in the latch string he raised a loose puncheon in the floor, slipped down into the cave below, through the still room, on through the low, winding passage, disturbing the bats as he passed, and out at the little entrance above the creek where his canoe lay rocking in the shadow of the spruce pines. Here he stopped a moment to examine a trap.

"They don't seem ter be no fur this year," he said, "but hit haint much count yit no-how."

So saying he replaced the trap, and untying the canoe, paddled across, and took his way along the path down the creek.

But even in Old Man Kline the voice of conscience was still audible. Hard as he tried to drown it in the tempest of his rage, it still spoke in a voice which he could but hear. To walk into a congregation of worshipers, to mark the man who had wronged

him, and murder him without warning—such a deed could not even Old Man Kline do, nor, for that matter, any other evil deed, without a protest from his better nature. Old Man Kline was usually cool, and it is possible that he had not been unaccustomed to deeds of crime; but still his conscience, though trampled upon for three score years and more, rose in vehement protest against his contemplated evil act, and would no more down than Banquo's ghost. With conflicting emotions, Old Man Kline walked on. Hark! What did he hear? The refrain of an old hymn repeated over and over. The old man's hearing was somewhat affected by age and exposure, and he was quite near the singers before he heard them. Drawing a little nearer, and looking through the bushes, he saw Mat and Et swinging in a low-hanging grape-vine, and singing as they moved slowly to and fro, a hymn which they had heard at meeting the previous Sunday :

“Jesus died for you, Jesus died for me;
Yes, Jesus died for Old Man Kline,
And Jesus died for me.”

The old man halted in a perfect bewilderment of feeling. Saul of Tarsus, stopped in his murderous errand by the light of heaven and the voice of Christ, was not more startled. Over and over the children sang it—

“Jesus died for Old Man Kline.”

The tune seemed familiar: the words even seemed so. What was this strange hymn so beautifully sung by the children? The old man leaned on his rifle and the tears started from his eyes. He drew nearer and yet nearer, until he stood behind the children, who continued to sing in time suited to the slow motion of the creaking grape-vine. Each time the line—“Jesus died for Old Man Kline” was repeated, added to his emotion. The nature of the mountain people is intensely religious and superstitious. Old Man Kline, though considered an infidel, believed implicitly in the supernatural, and constantly expected to see, and believed he did see, manifestations of superhuman power. More than once he had abandoned an enterprise for the day because of a warning in the shape of a rabbit cross-

ing the path ahead of him, and turned back immediately, but first making a cross mark in the road with his foot and spitting in it. On this occasion he never questioned that the children had been sent there by God to stop him in his road to murder, and his life of sin. Perhaps he was right.

How long Old Man Kline would have stood listening I do not know, but Et said :

"Now, Mat, you push me an' I'll swing, an' then, bye-an'-bye, I'll push you an' you'll swing."

Mat, accustomed to obey, descended. No wonder she was frightened when she saw Old Man Kline, whom, from her cradle, she had been taught to consider a monster, standing right before her. With a little scream she ran toward home, but stopped a few rods away to see what became of Et. Et stood her ground. She was frightened, but would not run.

"Howdy," she said, as boldly as she could.

"Don't run—come back—come back," said Kline, "I won't hurt ye. I want ter hear ye sing thet hyme agin."

Mat timidly returned and stood beside Et, and the old man sat on a rock close by, weeping for the first time in half a century.

"I've heerd thet hyme afore," he said to himself at length. "Hit taint 'Ole Man Kline'; hits 'all mankind'; but the Lord jes' larnt the chillern that away, an' sont 'em hyur ter sing ter me. 'All mankind' means Ole Man Kline—yes, I reckon thet's so. 'Jesus died fur Ole Man Kline.' Good Lord! An' what's Ole Man Kline? The wickedest, meanest ole varmit on God A'mighty's earth. O Lord! I'm a pore sinful critter. I haint wuth you apayin' no sort o' 'tention ter; but 'Jesus died fur Ole Man Kline.' O God! I wisht I cud pray. But I cain't pray. I don't know how ter pray. I cain't say nuthin' but 'God be merciful ter me a sinner.' But Lord, ef you'll let me live to git home, I'll smash up my still, an' take down my Bible, an' I'll swar so help me God ter try 'n' show folks they's some good left in Ole Man Kline."

He looked up. The little girls had gone. He shouldered his rifle, turned back, re-

crossed the creek, and disappeared in the narrow door of the cave.

The little girls had sung their refrain over and over until the old man began to pray, when, finding the opportunity favorable, they slipped away toward home. Half way back, Mat said :

"Say, Et, we lef' the pole 'n' line ; Tom'll be mad."

After a moment's hesitation Et said :

"I'm goin' back 'n' git it."

"No, sir, I won't do it," said Mat. "I haint agoin' back ter have thet ole boogerman ketch me."

"I haint afeard," said Et. "I'm agoin' back," and back she started.

Mat kept on toward home, but stopped in the pasture before she came to the foot-log, and waited out of sight of the house for Et. Et returned to the swing, and, after looking cautiously around to be sure that the old man had gone, picked up the pole and trudged back.

Half an hour later both Et and Mat crossed the foot-log and came to the house ; but they did not bring the pole ; and Et's

clothes were covered with dirt, and her hands and face and feet were scratched as though she had been dragged through the bushes. Et stubbornly refused to answer questions, and Mat knew nothing about it. Mrs. Nye sent Bettie's next younger sister, Sue, into the pasture for circumstantial evidence. She found in the path traces of a struggle, and a short distance up the hill found pole, hook and line. There was wool in the hook. Confronted by these facts, and requested, Et acknowledged that the truth was what appearances indicated—that returning she had met the sheep in the path, and fished for the old buck. She had succeeded beyond her most sanguine expectations, but had experienced some difficulty in hauling in her capture.

V.

Old Man Kline hung up his gun, took down his Bible, and read the fifty-first Psalm. It seemed to have been made for himself. With tears streaming down his wrinkled, parchment-like cheeks, he laid down the book and fell on his knees. How long he prayed he did not know. If people passed the gate he did not hear them. Had those who passed heard that Old Man Kline was converted, nothing, probably, would have attested the statement so satisfactorily as the fact that he prayed so earnestly that he did not hear them pass the gate, and never afterwards dunned them for the toll he lost while praying that autumn day.

At length he rose from his knees and opened the door. The sun shone with dazzling brightness through the door into the windowless cabin, and he retreated a pace or two with hands over his old eyes, weak

with weeping. The sun had never shone, he thought, with such brilliant splendor. He thought of Saul of Tarsus and the light which he saw. Again with streaming eyes he looked,

"Hit's the Sun o' Righteousness," he exclaimed, "ashinin' into my hard ole heart. O Lord, send healin' in his wings."

He wondered when Ireny Jane would return. He looked at the noon-mark on the floor; it was not yet nearly twelve o'clock, and Ireny Jane would not be home till one. He went to the spring that flowed under the big rock in the hollow close by, and there bathed his swollen eyes and fevered cheeks. How cold and clear the water was! What a magnificent gift of God was this fountain of clear, cold water—and he seemed never to have thought of gratitude for it before. Under the great beeches, whose low-hanging boughs hung golden festoons above him, Old Man Kline sat thankful, penitent, rejoicing, and withal bewildered.

It was not mere superstition. It originated, perhaps, in superstition, but it soon

got far beyond it. To be sure, the fact that the vision materialized, and proved to be his neighbor's children, did not bring to his old soul the suggestion that the Lord probably had had no hand in the event which had occasioned his conversion; but is this superstition? Perhaps so, but there was more than this in Old Man Kline's religion. It seems a small thing for God to use, does it not, the error of a baby's prattle to change the destiny of a soul; but has not God chosen the weak things of world to confound the mighty?

A few moments he sat by the spring while the fox-squirrels scampered over the carpet of leaves about him after the fallen nuts. The old man sat so still that they came very near him, and sat up with their fine brushes curled over their backs, nibbling the nuts and looking him full in the face.

"They never'd acome this nigh me yestidy," the old man said. "They alers runs from me, an' so does the chillen an' everything. I b'lieve I am a sure 'nuff Christian, an' God knows it, an' so does everything

else. I wisht I cud see some un an' tell 'em. I b'lieve I'll go to church,"

Returning to the cabin, he closed the door, pulled in the latch-string, took up the board in the floor, descended into the cave, and again started for church. But as he drew up his canoe under the green spruce pines and started over the same route to the church-house, he felt that the Old Man Kline had put off the old man, and was henceforth the New Man Kline.

A moment he paused by the now vacant grape-vine swing. It seemed a Jacob's ladder let down from heaven. The tall maple from which it hung seemed with its round, high dome of variegated foliage to form a resplendent canopy above his Bethel, and the sun, which shone as he thought he had never seen it shine, upon the crimson and yellow and verdant and purple of the autumn foliage seemed to reflect the glorious hues of the jewelled gates and golden pavements of the New Jerusalem.

VI.

The big meeting had been in progress for a week or more in the Beeswax Creek church-house. Day after day the low swinging limbs of the beech trees about the log temple were pulled lower and fastened to the bridle reins of the horses whose riders were attending the meetings. There had been a large attendance, but as yet very little special interest—only a half-dozen “conversions” and those of the regular, periodic, fever and ague sort. The ministers were beginning to feel that the crisis was approaching and that some break must occur soon. This morning Brother Townsley had preached a protracted sermon which took in its comprehensive scope the whole Bible so far as he knew it, from Genesis to Revelation. His sermon was followed by a hymn, the numerous stanzas of which differed from each other only in the insertion of “fathers,” “mothers” and other members of the family.

4/4

Gabriel's trump shall blow, Bye and bye,

Bye and bye, Gabriel's trump shall blow,

Bye and bye, To see our fathers a -

ris-ing, a - ris-ing, a - rising, To see our fathers a -

ris-ing, For the end is drawing now-ow-igh.

Brother Kendrick followed him with a learned dissertation on the origin of the devil. His first preliminary was to ascertain the meaning of the word "eternal." He threw down the gauntlet, and called on any man present for a definition.

"I look over this vast congregation, ah !
an' I inquire ; What does eternal mean ? I

want any man hyur ter tell me, what does



"WHAT DOES ETERNAL
MEAN?"

eternal mean? I turn to my brethern in the pul-pit an' I ast them, what does eternal mean? I look over this audience, an' I see the school-marster, an' I ast him, sir, what is the meanin' of the word eternal?"

Here he paused, not for a reply, but to make his own definition more impressive by the supposed inability of the others to define

the term. He stood for a full half minute with his skinny, warty hand lifted, his head inclined and his dull eyes fixed upon the school master, while that gentleman grew red and white by turns.

At this stage of the meeting there was an unexpected event. The preacher

turned his eyes from the embarrassed school master, and riveted his gaze on the door. Every head turned. Every eye was fixed with a stare that mingled curiosity with something akin to fear.

Old Man Kline stood for a full minute in the door, seemingly undecided. Then he walked right up the aisle to the front, and somewhat to the consternation of the preachers, began to speak.

"I don' know wut stage of the proceedin's yer got to,—I haint so awful familiar with the way they do sech things, nohow, though I uster go to meetin' years ago. But I jedge from the way ye look at me they haint gwine to be nothin' done till I do somethin', so I'll jes go ahead an' tell ye all I know, an' it won't take long, nuther. Wall, when I tell you wut I've come fur, you'll be more s'prised nor you be aseain' me hyur. I've come ter tell ye thet I've got religion. You all know me. You know I haint neither feared God nur regarded man. I haint agwine to tell yer all the devilmaint I've done—I've done did enough, an' a heap more nor wut I'd orter

a done, I kin tell yer thet. Today struck out from home to add another sin to them thet's ben adraggin' my soul down to hell. God furgive me fur wut I meant to do today. I was acomin' hyur, but I handn't no idy o' comin hyur to git religion, now I kin tell you. Wull, the Lord's Sperret striv with me as never before, but I resisted, an' I thought I'd quenched hit. Still I didn't feel right easy. I shuck an' trimled, an' had a notion to go back two or three times. But I kep' on abreathin' out threatinin's an' slaughters. Wull, they come a vision right afore me in the road. The Lord sont two leetle angels, jis' as sartin as ef I'd a seen 'em come right out o' heaven, an' they sot right plum in my road asingin', 'Jesus died fur Old Man Kline, Jesus died fur Old Man Kline.' Them's the very words they said, 'Jesus died fur Old Man Kline.' Brethering, when you see me acryin' hyur afore you now, yousee what no man haint seed, nor me myself, fur fifty year, I reckon. The Lord has jis' melted my ole heart, an' I fine hit a runnin' out of my eyes. I reckon this soun's

mighty quare to you, an' I kin tell you hit soun's quare to me, too. I don' feel lack myself—I don' har'ly know as I be myself—I feel an' act so different. I don' know wut to do, nor wut I'm gwine ter do. I reckon you've thought God didn't hev no in-trust in me, an' I've orfen thought so myself; but I've prayed God to be merciful to me a sinner, an' he's heerd my prar, an' now I know that Jesus died fur Old Man Kline."

There was a solemn pause. Every tongue clove to the roof of its mouth. At last the old man said :

"Brethering, pray fur me."

Brother Kendrick dropped on his knees and poured out such a prayer as never before, while sobs and Amens responded from all over the house. Old Man Kline followed in a voice choking with emotion, and at last broke down in tears and fled from the house into the woods, and back to his home by the forks.

VII.

Kline returned to his cabin. Where was Ireny Jane? He did not remember to have seen her at the meeting house. He waited until he was hungry, and still she did not come. The reaction from the intense strain of the morning began to come on. He prepared dinner, but hungry as he was, had no desire to eat. At length he started back toward the church-house, inquiring along the way for Ireny Jane. The news came to him with a terrible shock. Ireny Jane had not been to meeting, but had run away to Texas with Jacob Orwig. As if it were not enough that Hezekiah had disobeyed and deserted him, and that Bettie Nye was married to a vagabond, his one remaining darling had gone, and Old Man Kline was childless. All these years, with an affection as strong as it was rough and severe, the old man had loved those two children and Bettie as the only beings that

linked him to the rest of human kind. Now all were gone from him. If before he had been alone in the world, much more so was he now. Did ever the devil choose a better time to add the power of cumulative temptation to the momentum of a sinful life?

Let us in charity not record the words he spoke when first the truth came to him. For a time the devil sifted him as wheat, but in the end his faith failed not. But the issue was characteristic of the man. He slept very little that night; but when he rose in the morning it was with a settled determination, expressed in every line of his grim old face. One or two of the neighbors passed the gate early, less because of any business they had on the road than because of their desire to see how Old Man Kline was standing it. One of these threw out an interrogative hint as to what he would do in the premises.

"I reckon you'd make hit right hot fur Kier ur Jake ary one ef you wus ter ketch 'em?"

"No, Ike; I wouldn't touch 'em. Ef I'd a seed 'em jes atter I heerd tell on it, I dun-

no wut I mought adone. I'm afeared I mought adone more'n I hed orter: but I'm a Christian now. I've got a plan wut ter do, but hit haint no harm ter nobody."

While the dew was still on the shaded valley, he mounted his old horse and started over to the widow's.

"Hello!" he called out. "Hello!"

If ever a good woman was frightened it was Widow Orwig.

"Howdy, Mr. Kline," she said, timidly coming to the door.

"Howdy, ole woman," replied Old Man Kline, in a voice only less gruff than usual, but much less so than Mrs. Orwig expected to hear.

"Git on yer things an' come out hyur. I want ye ter take a ride with me."

"What things, Mr. Kline?" she asked.

"Yer weddin' things—the things ye war wen yer daughters gits married—the things ye expec' ter git married in yerself."

"I—I—I didn't never 'low ter marry 'gin, Mr. Kline," mildly remonstrated the widow.

"I know better 'n' thet," said Old Man

Kline. "Git on yer things." And meek Mrs. Orwig obeyed.

"What be ye goin' fur ter do?" she asked as she climbed the rail fence while Old Man Kline was trying to bring the old horse, unused to carrying double, into position for her to mount behind him.

"I'm gwineter see the end of this marry-in' business," replied Old Man Kline.

Down the creek they rode to Cracker's Neck, the county seat, and alighted at the court-house door. Having tied his horse to a swinging limb of the beech tree before the door, Old Man Kline took the widow and entered the office of the county court clerk.

"I want—some license," he said.

"What?" asked the astonished official, who recognized his customer.

"Some license—about a pint o' license. I reckon that'll be 'nough. Not license furter sell whisky, but furter marry this ole woman. I want the best quality o' license, wut I do git, but I don' need much on't. 'Bout a pint 'll do, I reckon. We're all gittin' married up our way. Yer don't need

no guardeen's permit, I reckon : we're both on us of age." And pocketing the document, for which he paid the fee, he took the unresisting widow, and remounting, turned toward Bone Lick.

The people were gathering for service when they rode up to the church-house door.

"Is they ary preacher hyur yit?" asked Old Man Kline.

"They's Brother Sykes acomin' now," answered some one; and at that moment the preacher rode up.

"Parson, d'ye reckon ye kin marry the widder hyur an' me?" he asked.

"I reckon we mought," answered the preacher.

"Wull, hyur's the license. I reckon 'taint while fur us ter 'light. We caint stay ter meetin' nowhow terday."

"Oh, I reckon ye best ter 'light," remonstrated Brother Sykes.

"Naw, jis' marry us hyur. We haint so nimble as we uset ter be."

Brother Sykes alighted in some amazement. "So ye want ter git married, do ye?"

"*I* do," answered the old man : " I dunno wether the widder does or not. I haint axed her yit."

" Hit's 'bout time ter ast her," suggested the minister.

" Wull, I'll let ye do thet."

When the widow was asked if she would love, honor and obey, she meekly answered that hit hed come sorter unexpected lack, but she reckoned she would, as Mr. Kline 'peared ter sorter desire hit. She hadn't never expected ter marry agin ; but Providence hed tuck away her son an' Mr. Kline's dorter, an' left her without no protector, an' him 'thout nary housekeeper, an' 'peared lack this wus the Lord's will, an' 'tud be wicked ter fly in the face o' Providence !

So the twain became one.

A story is current about Bone Lick that Old Man Kline, the first morning of his honey-moon, actually indulged in sentiment, and that on this wise. True to his custom he rose with the lark to pull down the pole, which, during the night, he was required to leave up, and, after washing him-

self in the spring under the beech tree, returned into the house just as Mrs. Kline was finishing her toilet. Throwing open the door, he let in the first rays of the rising sun, and viewing it, said :

"I see the beauty of the world has arose."

Mrs. Kline modestly appropriated the compliment to herself, and answered with a smile and sigh combined :

"Yes, Joseph; ef I only hed good clothes."

People prophesied a hard time for the little widow, but their predictions proved false. The marriage was on the whole a happy one. It may reasonably be doubted whether there was an old couple around Bone Lick or on Beeswax that lived more happily according to their somewhat *sui generis* idea of happiness. They agreed very well in their religion, although he was dipped and she had been poured kneeling in the stream. This difference they discussed fully as much as was profitable, and never agreed upon it; but it brought about no quarrel.

Besides his being a Baptist, while she remained a Methodist, there was one article of faith on which Mr. and Mrs. Kline never agreed. One night Mrs. Kline rose, and looking out of the door, was alarmed by a fall of meteors.

"Joseph! Joseph! Git up!" she cried. "The Day o' Jedgment is acomin'."

"Come back an' lay down, ole woman. Hit's only the dogs abarkin' at the moon achangin'! Who ever heerd tell of the *Day* o' Jedgment acomin' in the *night*?"

"Wy, *cose* hit'll come in the night."

"How d'ye know that?" he demanded.

"Wy, be—*cause*, hit will; that's wy."

"Yes; but *why*?"

"Wy, the Bible says so."

"No, hit don't."

"Hit does too."

"Wull, ye caint find the place."

But she persisted, and the dispute continued until the old man rose. Together they watched the meteors and read the Bible. The meteors stopped after an hour or so, but Mrs. Kline did not stop until she found that the day shall come as a thief, *in*

the night. But Joseph contended that when the Bible says day, it means day, and proved it by the use of the word from the first chapter of Genesis, on. But both agreed that something must have happened to cause such a falling of the stars: and the old man contended till the day of his death that the stars had never been so thick since that night.

Only once, and that early in their married life, did the old couple come to a genuine quarrel. The old man had had his own way for a good many years, and did not at once realize the fact that Mrs. Kline's wishes were to be consulted any more on other points than about marrying. Hence, his requests had a rather peremptory sound which grated on the ears of the meek little old woman. One day she went to the water bucket and found it almost empty.

"I did 'low ter git me a drink," she said, submissively, "but they haint no water hyur but a leetle, an' thet's warm."

"Go git ye a bucket," he replied, "Thet bucket's empty 'bout half the time. I go

thar a heap o' times, an' they haint no water in the bucket."



"YOU SET THAR FRONT ER THE HOUSE 'TH
YER CHEER TILTED BACK."

"Go git hit yerself," she replied. . "You set thar front er the house, 'th yer cheer tilted back, an' spec me ter pack yer water fur yer. Hyur!" and she extended toward him the pail and gourd. "Take this hyur gourd an' bucket, an' git me some water!"

Perhaps it was the first time in his life that Old Man Kline had ever been disobeyed to his face. And this time by a meek old woman who had promised to obey him. In an instant he was angry.

"Looky hyur, ole woman," he exclaimed, starting toward her, "don't yer mean ter git thet water?"

Mrs. Kline held the gourd and bucket. Quick as flash, when he took his threatening stride, she scooped up the water remaining in the bucket, a good, large gourdful, and dashed it into his eyes, and ere he recovered his sight and breath, pounced on him with the empty gourd and drove him from the room.

"No—I—don't!" she replied with vigor, and punctuated each word with a blow, till the third, when the gourd flew into fragments. And then, as he escaped through the door, she threw the handle, and last of all the bucket at him, and following her missiles to the door, she called after him:

"Joseph Kline, you come back an' pick up thet bucket an' git me some water. I

never packed no water fur no man yit, an' I haint goin' ter do hit fer you."

In sheer amazement he returned and picked up the bucket, and brought as much water as he could scoop up with the pail.

She wisely did not press to the limit of possibility the advantage she had gained. When he brought the water she addressed him in a tone that had in it more of her usual voice than of her late tirade, but still asserted its authority.

"Joseph, you climb up that larder an' git one o' them gourds thet's hangin' in the lof', an' cut me out a new dipper. Hit's a shame ter ask a woman ter use a ole rotten thing lack thet ole un uster be."

Again he obeyed; and as he sat in front of the cabin sunning himself and cutting out the dipper, he mentally reviewed his recent experiences, and said within himself:

"'Twarn't jest the proper thing fur ter goter snappin' caps on her that away, an' I won't do hit agin. Hit taint Christian, an' hit taint prudent. But good law! I never thought o' her abein' loaded."

Poor Bettie Nye never saw her expected home in the blue-grass. Her dissolute husband, who had deceived her about this and everything else, led her a hard life. To be sure, he was seldom at home ; but the uncertainty attending his return, and its results, made even his absences periods of anxiety and foreboding. About a year after their marriage, word came to Bettie that her husband had been stabbed in an affray growing out of a game of cards, and lay dying at Hazel Patch, near the foot of Wild Cat Mountain. Contrary to the advice of all her friends, she hastily mounted her father's horse, and rode all night over the mountains to the bedside of the man who had in a single year caused the roses to fade from her cheeks, and the light to die out from her eyes, and her merry laugh to give place to bitter tears. It was a sad procession that returned. They buried Bettie and her husband and her babe together.

In due time Hezekiah and Jake returned from Texas convinced that "the mountings is the best country fur a pore man." They partook cheerfully of the fatted calf and

seed corn of their father, and rejoiced in the old man's forgiveness, and the product of his wife's spinning wheel and loom : for the questions, "What shall we eat and drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed," had forced themselves upon the attention of the prodigals, in a way that brooked no evasion.

And the old man, though still gruff and reticent, and sometimes showing a good deal of the disposition of the old porcupine he had formerly been, was kind to his wife and children, and tolerably civil to his neighbors during his half dozen remaining years. He never became perfect ; he never attained the full stature of Christian manhood ; but this one thing he did : forgetting the things which were behind, and reaching forth unto those that were before, he pressed forward. After all, the next best thing to perfection is progress.

One morning the old man took his accustomed seat before the door, with his chair tipped back against the wall. When the old lady called him to dinner, she found him dead. He had seemed in usual health,

and the cause of his death was considered as mysterious as his life until word was received at the postoffice that the legislature had repealed the act establishing the tollgate. Then the people thought they understood it.



THE POET

THE POET OF FODDERSTACK MOUNTAIN.

From up the river and down—the only directions from which approach to Brushville is possible—came little squads of men, some on foot, some on horseback, and a few with ox teams. Men on lank, slab-sided horses, and others on rough, shaggy mules; men with long rifles whose tow-wound ram-rods projected four inches beyond the barrel, and others with heavy muskets, relics of “the late unpleasantness;” men followed by sneaking yellow dogs, and others by dirty white dogs, and others by mean looking black dogs, and others by poly-chromatic dogs, and others by skeletons of hounds, with flapping ears and pendant tails, and a look which seemed an apology for their existence. Men and guns and dogs and mules and horses filled the narrow street of Brushville and protruded into the woods beyond. It was no ordinary event which

had caused the county of Calhoun, through which a traveler might ride and imagine it to be, not exactly uninhabited, but certainly very sparsely settled, to shake itself by the corners, and throw together such a crowd at its county seat. The entire county seemed drawn together at the center, like the mouth of a bag under the influence of a gathering-string.

To be sure, it was county court day, a great attraction to the "mixing" Kentuckian; a day of visiting, and cattle buying, and horse-trading; but this was not all. The court received little attention; each man present felt in duty bound to shuffle into the court room for a minute or two, but not to stay. The business of the court was light. Two men were fined for "pistol-packin'," and a navigable stream was declared a public highway: for in the mountain counties roads are often made beside and in the beds of streams. But the real business of the crowd was a "speakin'"; for it lacked but a week of the August election. All the morning, while the court was in session, the crowd outside collected in little groups up

and down the narrow street, the central figure in each group being a voluble politician, who fluently expatiated on the merits of himself or his candidate. The voters strolled up and down, never stopping long in one place, forming little rings which unceasingly wound and unwound and interlaced. Often a boistrous laugh from one group would break up a half dozen others, whose numbers would be added to the crowd where the fun seemed to be. The politicians thus deserted were left without hearers until they could invent some new attraction.



ELECTIONEERING.

Besides a number of such fluent politicians was a host of satellites, each reflecting the glory of the candidate round whom he revolved in a manner both useful and popular. The insignia of their rank was a pair of saddle-bags. When one of them approached a man, and with a wink started for the back of the hotel, or the river bank, or the big rock a hundred yards up the hill, he was followed, not only by the man he thus signaled, but by a half dozen "floaters," who drank with both sides, and voted for the man who paid them most or treated them last. Good paths were worn that day to the few opaque objects accessible, each one of which received about as many visits as there were voters present. As there were more saddle-bags than convenient places to open them, some of the knights who bore them held their rendezvous in the woods beyond the town, stopping the thirsty pilgrims on their way thither, and ministering to the necessities of large delegations who came out from the town at intervals, "ter see wut war agoin' on hyur," and came back wiping their mouths.

Brushville is situated in the gorge of the Brush Mountains. The mountain range trends at right angles with the river, by which it is cut in two, and on either side of which it rises, abrupt, dark and threatening. It looks frowningly down at the cause of its division, and seems striving to crowd its two clean-cut ends together again. Right in the gorge where there seems hardly room for the narrow road between the hill and the river, stands the town, composed of ten or a dozen houses. The visitor approaching the mountain from either direction, and marking with his eye the long, curvi-linear range, needs not the tradition of the joint-snake to suggest the thought of another juncture of the broken-backed ridge, and trembles for the safety of the town, as he thinks that the next crawl toward union on the part of this long, green serpent, speckled with patches of gray rock, must inevitably crowd the houses into the river. Another danger seems to threaten the village. Several immense rocks repose balanced on the cliff above, and impend over the houses. Strangers are informed that these rocks are

chained ; but as those who give this information have never climbed the mountain, and only claim to have "heerd so," there may well be doubt of the truth of this statement.

Within the gates of Brushville were two strangers, to whom the scenes described were both novel and interesting. As they mingled with the crowd, they were approached by a little, spry, portly man with—

"Howdy, gen'lemen. What do you call your names?"

"Parsons is my name, sir," replied one of the young men, "and this is my friend, Mr. Case."

"Proud to meet you ; mighty proud to meet you. Ben well, gen'lemen? What part o' the county d'ye live at?"

"Mr. Case lives in Michigan. My home is in Ohio."

"Oh, Michigan ! Did ye ever know any o' the Thomsons there—old man Jeff Thomson an' his boys? He uster live out in Jackson on Hoss Lick, nigh Clover Bottom. Moved up inter Michigan eight or ten year ago. Haint never heerd from him sence.

Did ye ever see him, or hear tell whether he's adoin' any good? Let me see you a minute."

He drew them aside, and taking Parsons by the button-hole with one hand, while with his other he held Case's arm, he continued in a low, confidential tone :

"Wy, I'm a cand'ut for county jedge. My name's Jackson, some kin o' ole Hick'ry, I reckon. Everybody hyur knows me. I was borned and growed up in this county : lived hyur fifty-seven year the eighth day o' las' Feb'uary, ef nobody didn't tell no lies. An'—wen you're travelin' through the county 'tween now an' termorrer week—that's 'lection day—ef you hev a chance ter say a word for me, jes' say hit, ef you *please*. An' any time you're passin' my place out hyur on Cutshin, jes' stop an' see me. Ef I caint treat you good, I'll treat you clever."

"What party do you represent?" asked Case.

"The Law an' Order party, sir : the Law an' Order party, gen'lemen. I'll tell you how I be. I'm jest this away. I think they's mighty good men in both parties.

Mighty clever men, too, gen'lemen, an' a heap of 'em. Now, time o' the war, a heap o' my friends was Dimicrats, an' a heap was Radicals. An' so I—well, I never fit on nary side. I jes' says, says I, 'Gen'lemen, ef you'll please excuse me, I'll try to look attar the interests o' the people aroun' home,' says I. I never fit none then, an' I haint agoin' to now. So I'm in fur law an' order. How do you vote?"

"We believe in law and order, too," replied Case.

"Wy, of course," said the little man, much relieved; "Now that's jest wy I'm runnin' for the office of county jedge. I haint arunnin' myself: the people is runnin' me. I've held the office before: I reckon somebody's told you thet? No? Wy, I was the fust jedge of this county; I named this county. I would a named her Jackson attar Ole Hick'ry, only my name's Jackson, too. Modesty, gen'lemen. I b'lieve in modesty, an' law an' order. Yes, I was the fust man ever sot on the county jedge's bainch in this county. I've knowed her from the ground up. An' some says I'm

the best qualified man for thet same office now. But I leave thet for the voters to say Tuesday week. Yes, sir: gen'lemen, I was the fust jedge o' this county, elected jedge in eighteen and fifty-eight, an' held the office till—well, time o' the war, things was mighty onpleasant hyur, mighty onpleasant. An' 'peared lack a jedge couldn't suit both sides then, an' I jes' didn't want the office no longer. Folks will git a leetle bit *con-trairy* at sich times, a leetle grain *con-trairy*, an' so I jes' stepped out. An' I hadn't no more idy o' runnin' now than that—than that—than *nothin'*. But the people wanted my sarvices, an' I jes' couldn't say *you shaint hev 'em*. Fact is, gen'lemen, between you an' me an' the post, *they need me*. I wouldn't hev you say nothin' about hit, but our county affairs is in mighty bad shape, *mighty* bad. I don' know whar the blame lays, but a heap on 'em says hit's the fault o' the present county jedge. I don't make no charges, but a heap on 'em talks thet away. A heap o' our funds has been squandered, gen'lemen. Hyur we air taxed twenty cents on the hundred dollars

wuth fur state tax, an' as much fur county tax, an' two dollars poll tax, an' all our road tax, an' school tax, an' special tax, an' wy aint they more money in the county treasury? *I* want ter know. *I* don't say the county jedge has *stole hit*, but *I* jest wanter know *whar is hit*? *I* haint got nothin' ter say agin *him*. Ef he gits the office he'll do well 'nough, *I* reckon, ef he don't take his re-election ter mean thet he kin steal, an' the people don' keer. But *I* haint got nothin' ter say about him. *Only*, Mr.—Mr.—only gen'lemen, these is p'tic'ler times. An' we wanter *know* whose on the judiciary bainch of our county, an' ahandlin' our money. Thet's the way hit 'pears ter me."

"What is the name of your opponent?" asked Case.

"Watkins, sir. He's a preacher. An' he kin tell more lies, an' drink more whisky, an'—but *I* make hit a rule never ter say nothin' bad about an opponent. But people say he haint fit fur the office. *I* allers hev ter laugh at what Frank Hurd said the other day. Sezee, "Wen a lawyer quits lyin' an' goes ter preachin', they may be some

hope fur him : but wen a preacher gits inter the law, the devil's gwineter ketch him sure.' Ha ! ha ! ha ! Frank's a right clever feller. Ever see him ? He's hyur somers. But business is business, gen'lemen. I hev obleeged ter go. Good-bye, Mr.—Mr.—Parsons ! Oh, yes : I ort ter remember thet name. A feller o' thet name married a cousin o' mine. You favor him some. Well, good-bye. Hole on ! Will yer drink somethin' ? No ? Well, folks is different 'bout thet. I allers thought a dram was well 'nough in hit's place, but I'm agin this hyur drunkenness—'gin hit strong. Law 'n' order, gen'lemen. Thet's my ticket. 'Fye git out on Cutshin, stop an' stay all night with me. 'N' say ! *Ef* you git a chance, speak a good word fur me. I never forgit my friends. Good-bye, Mr.—Mr.—*Parsons*. Good-bye, Mr.—Mr.—gen'lemen, good-bye."

"Too late for dinner," called the landlord from the porch, as the young men later climbed the steps of the hotel. "The first table's full. Take seats : they'll be room soon. That water haint good ; been stand-

in' since mornin'. Here, Joe! Fill up this bucket fresh. Se' down. They haint very much water drunk here when we have a speakin'. But I reckon you fellers not bein' voters didn't get anything to drink. Hot? I should say hot!"

The landlord, coatless and vestless, sat and fanned himself with his straw hat. He himself was a candidate for jailor, which office he had held for years; feeding his prisoners with the remains from his hotel table. His election was certain, and he talked of the approaching contest with the unconcern of an outsider.

"Who will be your next county judge?" asked Case.

"Watkins, easily," replied the jailor.

"Are you a member of his church?"

"Me? Oh, no: I don't belong to none of 'em. I was raised a Presbyterian, and they're mostly Baptists here. Ever been to one of their meetin's? I don't mean your kind o' Baptists, but these Two Seeders—Hardshells, they call themselves? Well, you oughter go. I was to one of 'em yesterday, an' I've been plum mad ever since;

but I can't keep from laughin' about it. You see, I knowed there was a meetin' up on Lickskillet, and I thought I'd go over. Folks here likes to have the men they vote for come and see them. So I filled my saddle-rider, and went over to mix 'round and keep up my majority. There was more outside the house than in, but I thought before I come back home I'd better go in. You never heard one of 'em preach? Well, its a circus! They stomp and yell and spit and whine and snort and beller fit to kill. There was a feller preachin' when I went in, and I thought I'd go about half way up to let the brethren see I was there, and just as I was in the aisle, and looking for a seat, the preacher begun on me. And he said :

'N' here's ole brother Noel—ah! Friend Noel—ah! Not brother Noel, but friend Noel—ah! He's a can'dut fur jailor—ah! Oh, he'd better be a can'dut fur his soul—ah! But he's a good jailor, an' a mighty clever man, an' I think a heap of old friend Noel—ah! I'd like ter call him brother, I wist he was a Christian—ah! But oh, my

bretherin, I want you all to vote for old friend Noel—ah! An' now I'm comin' down, an' I'm gwine to give my hand to old friend Noel—ah!'

"And you may hang me if he didn't come down from the pulpit and shake hands with me, and beg the folks to vote for me, and me to git religion; and by thunder! I didn't know what to do! I couldn't insult him and disturb the meetin' just before election; and I had to stand there like a fool and take it. But I got out and started for home as soon as I could, and I found that while I was inside, the fellers outside had stole all the whisky in my saddle-rider. Taking it all round I was mad, but all the while I had to laugh."

"What is your Law and Order party?" asked Case, after a hearty laugh.

"No sich party here as ever I heard," replied Noel.

"Why, Judge Jackson told us that he is running on that ticket," suggested Case.

"Oh! Jackson, yes, ha! ha! He's a law 'n' order man. Yes, we have got a law 'n' order party; but they haint nobody in it

only him. Tell you how 'twas. 'Fore the war, (we date everything for'ard or back from the war, it's our B. C. and A. D.), 'fore the war he was a Democrat, an' haint never been nothing else; and when this county was organized he was appointed judge. He named this county. He would have named it Jackson, after old Giner'l Jackson an' himself, only they was one Jackson county already. So he named her Calhoun. I've always thought now the Radicals is in, we ought to change the name. I pin'ly believe if it was named after some good Republican, we'd get more rain and better craps. We're needin' some rain mighty bad right now, too. Well, there was a man waylaid and shot out here at Ground Hog's Glory, and he was a brother to a kunnel in the Yankee army who was stationed out on the Big Hill. And he marched out here with a squad o' men; and Jackson here and ole Sam Gilbert and his boys, and a passel more of 'em out on Cutshin and Hellfursartin, was 'bout all the Democrats they was here in Calhoun, and some thought they had a hand in it. I don't

know nothing 'bout it, nor no one else, I reckon ; but that kunnel was 'bout the maddest man ever I seed. He come here to Brushville, where Jackson was holding court, and the men surrounded the courthouse, and took Jackson out, and two of 'em held him while the kunnel licked him. I stood right there where yon rock is in the road, and I seed every lick. He hit him with a hick'ry about the size of that cheerpost, and he hit him twenty-three times. Well, since that time nobody haint heard Jackson admit that he's a Democrat. He's been a mighty feller for law and order ever since that time. He's honest and all right, and a 'nough sight better man than Watkins, but he can't get it on 'count of his war record, and not bein' a Radical. But there's room at the table now. Walk out, gentlemen."

II.

About the close of the dinner hour, the mail arrived. The patient old mule came plodding into the village, and refreshed himself with grass on the river bank while the carrier ate his dinner, and the postmaster looked over the contents of the double-pocketed leather pouch. The mail for all of Calhoun County was pitched promiscuously into the pouch at Livingstone, the terminus of the railroad, and sorted over at each postoffice on the way. This sorting, however, was not a lengthy operation, as the correspondence of Calhoun is not enormous. While he called aloud the names on the half-dozen letters addressed to Brushville, every man of the crowd that had wedged itself into the little store, stood on tip-toe and craned his neck with as much interest as though he expected a letter.

When the mail had been called and the

crowd dispersed to find more exciting scenes, the Rev. Judge Watkins remained for a moment to speak to the postmaster.



"ME BEIN' A POOBLC MAN."

"Mr. Pettibone, sah. I wish when ye call me mail, ye'd speak me name a leetle louder, sah, as *recognizing* the fact that I'm a pooblic man. I get mail from all around, sah—New York, Louisville and other

places. I have a printed letter to-day, axin' me to take a agency for medicines made in Cincinnati, sah. Me name has gone out, an' people is awritin' to me, sah. An' I wish you'd speak me name a leetle louder—I mean, with more distinctness,—me bein' a pooblic man."

Soon the crowd began to congregate around the little court-house, on the steps of which stood the orators, each one of whom in turn lauded himself and abused his opponents. One candidate for sheriff was accused by his opponent of having been a revenue officer, in which capacity he had vexed his neighbors by cutting up their stills and confiscating their whisky. The accused replied that he had indeed been a deputy marshal, but that he had never led in an expedition against a still near home, though he had known the location of many stills: that far from opposing the whisky business, he had never stolen but one thing in his life, and that was a still-cap for a poor widow whose only means of obtaining a living was her still. Applause greeted the statement. The speaker evidently

stood well as a candidate for sheriff, because he had neglected his sworn duty as deputy marshal.

The crowd kept in good humor. Very thin jokes called forth hearty responses; and some really apt repartees evoked yells whose echos were hurled by the two ends of the mountain back and forth across the river a dozen times, but with less and less of power, till the last reverberation, too weak to cross, dropped midway into the stream, and gently floated down the river and was drowned in its emerald depths. After each speech, the crowd called, "Fetch on another hoss!" until another speaker took the stand.

A candidate for surveyor said:

"I caint make no speech. But my opponent says I'm a gittin' too old an' stiff ter climb the hills and maisure land. Now ef some person'll hole my coat, I'll do what he caint do, an' see who's stiff. Hit's a trick I larnt when I war a boy; they call hit 'Skin the possum,' an' ef he kin do hit, young as he is, I'll pull out o' the race. An'

ef that haint 'nuff, I'll stump him to wrastle, an' show him ef I air old, I haint stiff."

Stripping off his coat, he went through with such a series of contortions as must have increased his majority by a hundred, and retired amid yells of applause for himself, and of derision for his opponent, who dared not accept his oft repeated challenge to "wrastle."

As the afternoon wore away, the speeches showed less of wit and more of abuse, while the enthusiasm of the crowd rose in proportion as the contents of the bottles in the saddle-bags lowered. As "the mirth and fun grew fast and furious," the strangers again withdrew to the hotel porch.

"Well, Case, this is interesting, but it isn't teaching school; and it doesn't fill our pocket-books very fast."

"We are too late," replied Case. "The schools are all engaged, and nearly all are in session."

"Yes, and we must go back North, richer only in experience."

"Say, Parsons, why need we go back? Like that old sinner in the postoffice, our

names have gone out. Men hearing of our greatness, send us printed letters inviting us to accept agencies for books, washing machines, button-hole cutters, and combination affairs which can be used as corkscrew, boot-jack, cross-cut saw, griddle-lifter, pancake-turner, glass-cutter, needle-threader, dish cloth, and lightning rod, with hot and cold water, gas, elevator and electric bells, all for the small sum of twenty-five cents, of which the agent gets fifteen, and a chromo with every dozen. Let us take an agency."

"For some combination swindle? I'd be a Jew pack-peddler first, and sell 'napgeens und daple glots pelow goshd.'"

"Very few you'd sell here. No, Parsons, I mean to sell books."

"Books! My dear Case, you might as well try to sell——"

"No, Parsons, you are mistaken. This is a good field for the book agent. He has not become so familiar an object as to have bred contempt. I have seen several subscription books along our line of march. The people have little money, but they have

as little use for it. We can do good selling a good book, and make money besides."

"But can we sell them?"

"My dear fellow, did you not notice in every house on Frog Branch a fifteen dollar clock? And did you not observe that the sewing machine agent has taken Spooner's Holler on the installment plan? And did we not remark that every house on Ground Hog's Glory, not one of which could be insured for thirty dollars, is protected by forty dollar's worth of lightning rod, with a gilt vane and a ball as large as a school globe? We could sell anything else better than books, I dare say, but we can sell books, too. We may not become so wealthy as to indulge immediately our cherished ambition of endowing our Alma Mater—bless her!—but we can make a living. And if we do not ride home in a chartered Pullman, we may at least avoid the necessity of returning on a tie ticket."

At this moment Judge Jackson ascended the steps.

"Which way do you go from hyur, gentlemen?" he asked.

"We are walking through from Pine Knot to Livingstone, and taking in the scenery."

"Wull, caint ye come out to my place over on Cutshin? Hit taint much outer yer road. I'd be right proud ter see you thar."

"Are there any schools out that way that are not engaged?"

"Wy, they haint many left, thet's a fact: but say! Do you fellers want ter teach? We hed a teacher engaged, an' he tuck sick. I'd like ter git a good teacher in his place—I'm trustee. The bes' teachers has all got schools, an' I'm down on this thing o' havin' no school. Last year we had a feller thet didn't know nothin'. He started with eighty students, but they kep' a drappin' out, an' the last two months he driv a bark-wagon, an' jes' stopped every mornin' at the door ter see thet they warn't no students thar, and collected his pay fur a day's teachin', an' a day's haulin', too. But I want a good teacher thet'll keep our school up, an' larn the chaps. Now, ef ary one er you is a teacher, I haint no sorter doubt but we kin git ye the school."

"We have come expecting to teach, and to get acquainted with the country," said Case, "but we find that we are rather late."



THE EDITOR VISITING KENTUCKY.

"Wull, hit taint too late fur one o' yer. You jes' come out an' stay with me ternight. I'm gwine home right now. Good time ter leave now, 'fore any person gits killed. I'm in fur law 'n' order. I reckon you fellers to the No'th don't think they is ar'y such thing hyur? I've seed some No'the'n

papers as looked thet away. The editors talked lack hit wouldn't do fur a feller ter come inter Kaintuck 'thout totin' a gun shop along. Wull, they do kill men hyur by



THE JUDGE VISITING THE CITY.

spells, but they haint orfen a man killed but wut we kin spare as well as not. Hit would be better fur us ef they was more killed nor wut they is, takin' the average thet dies with their boots on. But then hit taint law 'n' order. An' ef we air rough, we're

clever. I've thought about hit a heap o' times sence I went ter Cincinnati four year ago. Thar war whar the papers come from I war tellin' ye 'bout, an' I thought they war all angels thar. But hyur war a feller asellin' gold rings fur a qua'ter; an' thar war a wooden-laiged feller with a organ abeggin'; an' hyur come a man acallin' me by name, an' axin' didn't I remember him, an' abeggin' me fur ter lend him ten dollars, as how he war a ole friend, an' take his gold watch fur security, fur he'd lost his pocket-book. An' I couldn't go as fur as from hyur across the river till I'd meet some feller abeggin' or tryin' ter rob me one. An' I jes' 'lowed ef we do kill men hyur, we don't rob 'em. Ha! ha! ha! Whar's yer beastis? Oh, yes; yer awalkin'. Wull, yer jes' go down by the ford, an' wait till I ketch my nag. Hey, Bill! Gwine home? Glad on hit. Hyur's two gen'lemen wants ter be sot over the river. You take one on 'em ahind you, an' I'll tote 'tother one over. Jes' you go down to the ford, Mr.—Mr.—*Parsons*? Yes, thet's hit! I orter remember thet; I've got kin folks o' thet

name—did I tell yer? You go down to the ford, Mr.—Chase? *Case!* Wull, I got nigher than I do a heap o' times. Mighty quare I disremember names so: I kin tell a man's face fur's I kin see hit. You go down ter the ford, an' we'll ketch our beastis. Hyur's some more fellers agwine our way. We'll git thar time you do, an' set yer over. Hello, Ike! Gwine home? You best ter go. Ef everyone would go home now they'd all ahed their fun, an' they wouldn't be no more widders than wut they is now. I like fun as well as any man alivin', I reckon, gen'lemen, but I'm a mighty feller fur law 'n' order."

Pleased with the turn affairs had taken, our friends made their way to the ford, where they were soon joined by the judge and his party. The judge rode up to a stump, from which Case mounted behind him, but the Judge's neighbor dismounted and let Parsons occupy the saddle, which already held a bag containing a peck of salt, a pound of coffee and a roll of cotton cloth, and himself mounted behind.

"Thet's right, Bill," said the Judge. "Let the gen'leman up before. I'd do the same ef I 's as young as you. But the last six year I've hed the rheumatiz so bad hit takes a arthquake ter git me out o' my stirrups."

III.

The sun was taking his last look over Fodderstack Mountain into the valley of Cutshin ; and stealing through the morning glory vines on the porch of the largest and best house on the creek, marking the porch floor and the wall of the house into fantastic shapes of light and shade, as the Judge and his guests drew near. At one end of the porch stood a loom, at which a woman of forty or forty-five was working. Though her motions were laborious on account of her stout proportions, they displayed a natural grace and dexterity. And though deep lines in her face, showing traces of sad experiences, gave her at times an old look, her merry laugh and a love of fun, which was almost girlish, made her seem younger than she really was. In the middle of the porch, her daughter was spinning. As she walked to and fro to the music of her wheel, beaten into measures by the

tread of the loom, now balanced on one brown bare foot, and now on the other, now twirling the right hand, and now carefully extending the left, her perfect poise and symmetrical, easy gesture showed a grace as attractive as it was unconscious. Case approaching thought her a beauty. Thomas Jefferson Todd, the Poet, had long entertained the same opinion.

This man Todd was at the Judge's house this afternoon. He taught the school in the adjoining district of Fodderstack Mountain, and often came over to the Jackson house after his day's work was over. He was tall and lank and cadaverous. He might have been thirty or thirty-three, but his long beard, at which he was forever tugging, made him appear older. His upper lip bristled with a two-weeks' growth. His hair was unkempt and bushy. His trousers, which were too short by four inches, revealed the fact that he wore no hose. His pockets bulged out with books and papers, and he carried a faded umbrella. Yet he was a mine of information on almost every point, and his greatness

of heart was too little appreciated by those who knew him. Mrs. Jackson was somewhat of a reader, and gave him literary suggestions; and Jessie, being a bright, sympathetic, romantic little soul, proved a most delightful listener. Indeed, it was more for the sake of Jessie's attention than for Mrs. Jackson's criticism that Todd came over so often. He never addressed his poems to her, nor hinted that she had inspired them, but several of his best were her exclusive property. And it cannot be doubted that Jessie enjoyed his visits. When he sat reciting his poems, she entirely overlooked his ungainliness, and his artificial politeness, and enjoyed his verses. The verses themselves, though on a narrow range of subjects, with limited forms of expression, and frequent recurrence of the same rhyme, though often with defective meter, and with highly over-wrought figures, contained evidence of true poetic spirit. He was interrupted in the midst of his reading such a poem when the men arrived from the speaking, and was not able to resume: for Mrs. Jackson and Jessie, seeing

the strangers, departed to make some extra preparations for supper, to which Todd also remained.

After supper the Judge and his guests sat upon the porch till the sun went down, and the harvest moon rose in all its splendor. From the approaching election, the first subject of conversation, the talk became general, and gave Case and Parsons some opportunity to call out the ideas of Todd on various matters. His information was extensive. He pronounced "Socrates" in two syllables, but was familiar with his whole history. He called "Czar," "Cæsar," but he knew as much about Russia as either of the young men who had a month previous emerged from college with sheepskins under their arms and capital letters after their names. Upon some subjects he talked like a fanatic, on others he spoke like a philosopher. The young men hardly knew whether to honor or laugh at him. When they were alone, they compared opinions, and declared themselves unable to decide with what manner of man they had to deal.

When Todd started for home, he invited Parsons and Case to go a half mile with him to a lovely cascade, whose waters he declared would be most beautiful in the moonlight. On the way, their conversation was about music.

"Gentlemen," asked Todd, "can either of you sing and read notes?"

Parsons replied that he was not a musician, but that Case could both sing and play the piano.

"Are you a musician, Mr. Todd?" he asked.

"No, sir : I sing a little, but know nothing of musical science. I wrote a song a while ago, and sent it to a publisher, who had it set to music, and printed it."

"I should like to see it," said Case.

"Would you, really?" asked Todd, with sudden delight. "I have a copy with me," and from one of his bulged-out pockets he took a roll, removed the string and double wrapping, and handed Case a sheet of music entitled "Sweet Jessie."

Case hummed it through, while Parsons, looking over his shoulder, said ;

"I'm no judge of the music, but the words are good. Sing it for us, Case."

"No, thank you," replied Case, "the light is bad."

"Shame on you, Case! It is as light as day."

"Mr. Case," broke in Todd, "I have long waited for some one to sing that song for me. Why should I write songs for others and never hear them myself? Must the poet receive no joy from his own poetry? Friend Case, please sing me 'Sweet Jessie.'"

"I have a cold," pleaded Case, who saw that Parsons was bent on sport. "Really, I hardly think I can sing."

"Pshaw, Case! You can sing better when you have a cold than other men can without. You are becoming a confirmed prevaricator. I shall expect to see you in Congress if you don't reform. You see, Mr. Todd, our friend Case is an extremely modest man, but he mustn't allow his modesty to cause him to tell George Washingtons. Cold, indeed! Sing it, Case."

Thus urged, Case began to sing, and at last waded through it, while Todd walked

back and forth in extreme agitation, with one arm under his coat-skirts, while the other hand firmly grasping his cotton umbrella round its waist, beat time to the music.

"Thank you ! thank you !" he exclaimed, as Case finished. "Now let me see if I can sing it. You must teach it to me."

"If you fellows will excuse me while you are at your music business," broke in Parsons, unable longer to contain himself, "I will step up the path and take a nearer view of the water."

Case sang the song over and over to Todd, his vexation and amusement about equally mixed, and as he sang he fancied that he could hear Parsons a few rods up the stream laughing at him.

"You unprincipled villian !" he said to Parsons, as they were returning alone, "Why did you tell him that I can sing?"

"Oh, Case ! This is *too* good ! I never saw you look quite so foolish before ! What a ridiculous pair you were indeed ; singing there in the moonlight, and that great mountaineer, with a voice like a saw-mill whistle, beating time with his umbrella ! Ha ! ha !"

Perhaps it was because of this scene that Case formed something of a dislike for Todd, but there are those who think that Jessie Jackson was the real reason. But neither of the young men knew that before Todd left the Judge's house, he contrived to convey to Jessie a package containing a small paste-board box. When that young lady opened it, she found within, a water lily, and some verses. They were not specially inscribed to her—none of his verses were ostensibly for her—but she understood them very well, and liked them.

THE WATER LILY.

I strolled one day by the rippling stream,
Where the water-lilies grow,
Stretching to grasp at the sun's bright beam
From their watery home below.

I saw the flower and the oursting bud,
As they blossomed so bright and fair,
And floated and rocked on the crystal flood
With its gentle ripples there.

I looked at the boat so light and small,
Tied fast to a birch hard by:
"I'll gather the fairest flower of all
For my own true love," said I.

I sprang in the boat at the pleasant thought,
And out from the shore I pressed,
And the fairest lily of all I sought
For the one I love the best.

I tore from the root the hollow stem,
And treasured the blossom fair,
And smiled as I thought how the floral gem
Would look in my lady's hair.

But soon I awoke from my foolish dream,
For my lady was far away,
And I dropped the flower in the flowing stream
And turned from the lilies gay.

Again I took up the slender oar,
With a stroke both sad and slow,
And I stood again on the pebbled shore
And gazed in the stream below.

I watched my lily drift away,
So beautiful, white and fair,
And my heart grew sad that had been so gay,
For I wished that my love were there.

IV.

Judge Jackson was chairman of the board of trustees in the Cutshin district. One of the other trustees had been interviewed on the way home. In the morning, after they had seen the farm, the Judge and his friends went in search of the third. They found him seated on a stump in his corn-field, which he was hoeing for the last time, eating his lunch, and occasionally bestowing a bone upon his fox-hound, who sat looking up into his face as he ate.



The whole matter was easily arranged. Case was to teach the school and board with the Judge, while Parsons was to sell books somewhere in the mountains. At the end of five months they would return North with their experience and as much money as they could accumulate. Parsons at once wrote to a publisher, and soon received his prospectus, and was assigned territory in an adjacent county.

Case began teaching at once, and on Tuesday, election day, Parsons went with the Judge to Brushville, and from thence to his field of labor. He had some opportunity to study Kentucky elections. He was surprised to find that there was no ballot-box. The voters passed an open window and called aloud the names of their candidates to men within, who recorded the vote. As many did not know the names of all their candidates, politicians stood by the window to answer for them, and the voters responded. More than one man was too drunk to give more of an answer than the required assent to the politician's prompting. Something like this dialogue occurred :

Official—"Who do you want for Governor?"

Politician—"He wants Proctor Knot."

Official—"Do you want Proctor Knot?"

Voter—"Yes."

So the dialogue went on through the ticket. After a man had "been voted"—for such is the expression used concerning it—he was led away, and the official cried out:

"John Smith voted for Proctor Knot and others!"

Large numbers of votes were bought. The market price rose highest about two o'clock in the afternoon. There was, consequently, little voting done in the morning, especially as every man was entitled, so long as his vote was considered doubtful, to free whisky from both sides.

While Parsons was sitting alone in the woods after dinner, an old colored man, who came and sat near him to eat his lunch, was approached by a candidate who proposed to buy his vote.

"Wat'll you gib me?" asked the negro.

"Give you a dollar."

"No : take mo'n dat."

"Well, dollar 'n' a quarter, then."

"No ; I cyan' sell my wote fo' dat."

"How'll a dollar 'n' a half do?"

This offer also was refused, and so on up to two dollars.

"*Will* ye gib me two dollahs sho nuff?"

"Yes."

"Lemme see de money."

Two silver dollars were laid in the hand of the old man, who looked at them wistfully, and then handed them back.

"Ise mighty po', but I cyan sell my wote."

Parsôns was on the point of going over to shake hands with the honest voter, when there approached a candidate on the other ticket, from whose talk with the negro it appeared that he had already sold his vote to that side for two dollars and a quarter.

There is often trouble on election day, but this one, with the exception of one or two incipient fights promptly checked, was peaceable. Parsons spent the day in studying Southern election methods, stayed at Noel's hotel that night, and on the next day went to his territory.

Before the two friends separated, they attended a meeting of the colored people of the neighborhood. They were few in number and had no regular preacher. On this occasion they were instructed by the son of a somewhat noted colored preacher from Virginia, whose sermon, entitled "De Sun do Run" has often appeared in the newspapers. He was somewhat foppish in appearance, and confident in manner. After exhorting his hearers to remember the text, and announcing that he expected to "preach like smoke," and "dey wasn't many ob 'em cud git ter whar he was gwinter today," he began to read about Naaman, who was "a mighty man in de valley, but he was a lip-pert;" but finding the chapter too hard for him, he laid down his Bible, saying—

"Taint while fur me ter be areadin' dis whole chaptah. Ise been to all dese yer little schools an' all dat, but dat don' mount ter much—I *cud* read it, but it taint while: I wants ter git ter preachin'. An' de tex'—now I want yer ter membah whah it is—de Secun' Book o' Kings an' de fust chaptah an' de tirteenth vus: 'My fadah drew

neah, an' said, Ef de prophet had a told thee fur ter do some gret ting, would thou not had adone it?"

And there are very few who "git to whar" he soared that day.

But the thing which the young men remembered longest was not the oddities in the preacher's words and style; not the quaint, wierd hymns, sung with a swaying motion of the body and a patting of the foot; not the fervor of the "agonizin' sisters," who, at unexpected intervals, shouted and jumped, and spun down the aisle like erratic tops; but the prayer of an ignorant old man. There was nothing remarkable about him—at least, they had noticed nothing remarkable as they had passed his little house, and seen him seated beside the door on a dilapidated barrel—he was simply a sincere, benevolent, sensible man, who could not read a word. But there was something in his prayer which made them entirely forget the ludicrous mistakes which it contained, and listen to its full periods and solemn, earnest tone with feelings of reverence and almost of awe.



UNCLE HABAKKUK.

UNCLE HABAKKUK'S PRAYER.

"Mos' Holy an' Righteous an' ebbah to be adored, art Dou O Lawd ou' Hebbenly Fathah, befo' whom angels an' archangels cas' down dey glitterin' crowns, cryin' Holy, Holy, Holy art de Lord God ub de Sabbath—

"It is in dy 'mediate and divine presence dat a few ob dy unworthy chillen has bowed ou'selves upon de bended knees ub ou' sin-decayed bodies, to rendah unto Dee ou' mos' serus an' sinceah thanks dat we has been permitted one mo' time to see de risin' ub anuddah sun upon de earth, an' de settin' ub de same behind de western hills. An' wile we so rettempt to bow befo' Dee, wilt Dou be pleased to bow ou' heahts below ou' knees, an' ou' knees below de dus' ob humility. Oh! Lawd! my Fathah! wile we so rettempt to bow befo' Dee, wilt Dou be pleased to grant unto us a prayin' mine an' a prayin' heaht ef it is dy holy an' divine will. May we not pray fo' a fohm no' a fashion, but wuship Dee in sperrit an' in truf; fo' Dou hast said at Dou desirest sich on'y to sarve Dee. May dis prah come

fum de diptheria* ub my heaht, an' not
frum de end ub my lips on'y, we humbly
beg fo' Jesus sake.

"We feel, ou' Fathah, as po' needy creetahs
as ebbah called upon dy great an' holy
name. We has sinned against Dee times
widout numbah, wid a high han' an' a
outstretched ahm. But we pray Dee to
draw feelin'ly an' sensibly neah to ebry soul
widin de soun' ub my voice, ef it is dy
holy an' divine will. O Jesus Mahstah!
Fo'gib ou' sins an' move 'em as fah fum us
as de eas' is fum de wes'; wey dey'll nebah
trouble us no mo' wile dis wul stan's, no'
condemn us in de wul ter come. Gib us a
prayin' mine an' a prayin' heaht, we humbly
beg fo' Jesus sake.

O *my* Fathah! I ax you won' you be
preased to bress dy ministerin' sarvant wat's
agwinter speak to us ternight? to stan upon
de walls ub Zion an' to clar dy truf atween
de libbin an' de dead. Be tongue an' ut-
tunce fo' him. Tie his tongue to de line ob

*"Diptheria" in this connection is believed to be an at-
tempt to combine "depth" and "interior."

truf. Cut loose his stammerin' tongue an' gib him a tongue ub penny-wriah.* Go wid him all along de uneben journey ub life. Right all his many wrongs. Guide him an' correct him : be a guidin' lamp befo' him an' a 'tectin' angel behine him whar-sumebbah his feet may roam, ef it is dy holy an' bressed will.

"Fathah ub much mussy, You know Yous said in you written wud dat wey deys one or two dat's met togeddah in dy name Dou wilt be in dey midst an' dat ter bress. O Jesus Mahstah ! Ef ou' heahs deceib us not, heah is nuff' ter claim de bressin' wich Dou has promised in de unsarchable riches ub dy written wud. Oh ! Fathah ub mussy an' God ub lub ! Won't You be preased to come nter dis meetin' ternight an' bress us wid de out an' down-pourin' ub dy holy an' bressed Sperrit, ef it is dy holy will.

*Penny-wriah, so pronounced as to be understood "penny-royal." A writer in the *American Missionary* recently stated that an old colored man had prayed that the writer might have "a penny-royal tongue." What Uncle Habakkuk understands by the expression may be doubted, but it is derived by successive abbreviations from "tongue like the pen of a ready writer."

"Fathah ub much mussy an' God ub infinit lub, won't You be preased ter hab mussy on de sinnah man ternight, bofe wite an' cullud, all up an' down de meanderins ob Cutshin ternight, ef it is dy holy an' divine will? Show 'em dat deys hah-hung an' breeze shaken ober hell. Trouble dey souls, an' gib 'em no peace, night o' day, tell dey leabs off dey sin an' comes ober onto de side ob rectitude an' right. Bress de wicked companions ub dese agonizin' sistahs wuts widout God an' widout hope in de wul'. Don' cut 'em off in dey sin ternight. Gib 'em jes' one mo' day's time ter see whey dey stan's, an' let 'em come an' be saved on de anarchial* terms ub de gospel. Bress de news cayah an' de peace-breakah; de back-slidah an' de hypocrite, bofe wite an' cullud, tonight, all ober Moses' boun's. Hab mussy on ou' neighbahs an' ou' neighbah's chillen wut hain' got no mussy on deyselves. Bress all sawts an' conditions ub men as fah as man has trod de earf o' sailed de sea. Bress de widow an' de widow's chillen;

*"Anarchial." Probably meaning "amicable."

bress de po' an' de needy, de 'flicted an' de 'stressed, de lame *an'* de halt, de cripple, *an'* de bline all ober de hull univarsity wul. Bress de lan'-trabblar an' de sea-sailah ter-night, my Fathah ; de prisnah an' de soger, wharsumebbah dey may be, ef it is dy holy an' divine will.

An' now, O Jesus Mahstah ! bress po' unworthy me, dat feels de leas' ub all dy beliebin' chillen, ef anything at all. Bress me now as I tottah down to de grabe on de staff ub ole age. Fro' 'bout me dy alm ub protection wut'll hole wen de wul ketch fiah. Guide me an' correct me wharsumebbah I may go. Fo'gib all my sins, an' right all my many wrongs. Keep my feet in de right paff, an' tie my tongue to de line ub truf. An' now, wile dis lump o' clay is 'pahin' fo' its muddah dus', prepah my soul fo' de joys ub dy kingdom : an' wen Dou's done sarbin dy holy an' righteous pu'pose wid us heah, receib us all to Dyseli widout de loss ub one ; we humbly beg fo' Jesus sake, AMEN AN' AMEN.

V.

On election night, while the Judge was away at the polls, Mrs. Jackson, Jessie and Case, sat talking over the Judge's defeat, which by this time was conceded by all.

"I've often wondered how I came to marry a Democrat," said Mrs. Jackson with a laugh, "but his politics and mine don't interfere with our family affairs. I gave up my politics when I married."

"You were a Republican, were you?" asked Case.

"Indeed I was. My father was a Republican when it wasn't popular. My grandfather was a Northern man and a Whig. He came to Mill Spring, Wayne county, when father was a boy. He taught his children so thoroughly that my father grew up an Abolitionist, and became the only Republican in our neighborhood. It took courage to be an Abolitionist then."

"Tell me more about it," said Case. Drawn on by questions and comments, Mrs. Jackson related the following experience:

MRS. JACKSON'S STORY.

"At the election of 1856 my father was so bent upon casting a Republican vote, that he sent North for a Fremont ticket. When the ballots were counted, his was thrown out upon the ground in the sight of an angry crowd. An indignation meeting, held forthwith, served notice on my father to leave the state within ten days. Father began to add to his already somewhat complete stock of firearms, and I and my brother and sister, both younger than I, began to practice. We soon became sufficiently expert to cut a string or kill a cricket at ten paces. The order for our removal was, therefore, never enforced. We were allowed to remain, but were in constant expectation of an attack.

"Thus we were on the ground when the war broke out, and the rebels invaded our region. In October, 1861, Zollicoffer and Crittenden, having been defeated by the

loyal home-guards at Wild Cat Mountain, took possession of Mill Spring Hill. The infantry were armed with poor state flintlocks, but the cavalry were the flower of the South—as fine horsemen as I ever saw. One regiment rode white horses: another had only black horses. Their uniform was velvet with tinsel trimmings, and their arms were of the best quality. Behind each man rode a darkey on a mule to attend to his master's horse and baggage. Poor fellows! They thought they were out for a holiday. In striking contrast with them was the appearance of the first regiment of Northern cavalry which we saw. It was a Michigan regiment which had never before ridden, I should think. They came out from Somerset to Mill Spring after the battle, humped over in their saddles, lame from the jolting, and half of them holding to their horse's manes.

"My father had left home on the approach of the rebels, for he knew he would be killed if captured. Zollicoffer established his headquarters in our house, and pitched his tent, in which he held his coun-

cils, immediately in front. Almost the first thing he did was to set a price on my father's head. He offered a thousand dollars for him, dead or alive, delivered at headquarters. We never went to bed without fearing that we should wake to see our father's dead body brought to his own door for the reward of his murder. Even after my father joined the Union army, and would, if captured, have been a prisoner of war, the price was not removed from his head. Indeed, we overheard Zollicoffer and his officers in council, discussing the propriety of sending my twelve year old brother South as an hostage till my father should appear. They knew that father would never let his boy starve in a Southern prison if he could save him by forfeiting his own life, and they meant to kill my father even by such means. That night I took my brother in a canoe, and slipping down the Cumberland, set him inside Thomas's lines, and walked home in the night, alone, and through the rebel lines.

"Yes, indeed: those were trying experi-

ences for a girl of my age. But I had harder ones when the battle came.

" Across the point from Fishing Creek to the river, the rebels had dug a ditch, twenty feet wide and of equal depth. The earth was thrown up into an embankment, twenty feet high. This ditch was flooded from Fishing Creek. Some of the infantry and the negroes did the digging. The cavalry refused to dig. I used to feel sorry for those poor boys. War proved to be a very different matter from what they had thought it when they left home. When they first came, a dead comrade was interred with all the ceremony of the regular army—funeral march, reversed arms and muffled drums, and volleys fired over the grave. But late in the fall, dysentery broke out, and became epidemic. Then all ceremony was set aside. The dead was carelessly taken on a board, with an old friend on either end, and carried to the top of the embankment, where, with 'one, two three!' the body was thrown into the ditch, and covered with a few shovelsful of earth pitched down from the top. After the troops had left, we

women had to go there, and, indeed, over our very lawn, which, after the battle, was also used as a cemetery, covering with fire-shovels, the only tools left us, protruding hands and feet and faces.

"On the evening of January 18th, 1862, Thomas moved a regiment from Somerset to the other side of Fishing Creek. A rain that night raised the creek, and cut the troops off from the main army. Before daylight the next morning, old Mrs. Taylor, who kept a store near Fishing Creek, brought the news to Zollicoffer. From my window I could hear her shrill voice quivering with excitement, in the tent in front—

"'There's a thousand blue-coats down by my house, an' the creek has riz so they can't git back, an' you can bag 'em like pa'tridges!'

"The drum beat the long roll, and the men fell into rank. Crittenden, the first in command, was drunk. I saw his aids—'Bow-knee Roberts,' of Louisville, was one of them—lift him into his saddle, and hold him on either side, as, with hanging hands and head thrown down upon his chest, he

rode into battle. The rain came down in sheets, and continued during the entire battle. The fog was dense, but I could see the river, as, in the dim light of dawn, the troops were ferried over in a single steamer and a number of barges. The Federals waited until the rebels were almost within range, and then ran their pontoon boats into the creek, and escaped. The rebels were unable to follow them, but were held there, exposed to a merciless fire. Mrs. Taylor afterward described it to me—

“ ‘The infernal Yankees! They jest run them boats on wagons right into the water, an’ crossed as if the creek wan’t up at all; an’ then turned ’round an’ shot our boys!’ ”

“ Thomas moved down on the surprised rebels, who were compelled to defend themselves without breastworks, and with old flintlocks which were absolutely useless in such a storm. The rebels loaded, but could not fire. After the battle I saw the Union soldiers draw five loads from one gun, whose owner evidently supposed that it had gone off each time.

“ Retreat was inevitable. Soon the rebel

ferry-boats were called to take their soldiers back. When the first panic-stricken fugitives arrived at the river, they rushed aboard the steamer—there must have been three hundred of them—and crowded to the opposite side of the boat. I was watching it all from the house, and saw that boat, in a single instant, turn bottom upward in the river. The boiler exploded, and the swollen, muddy stream seemed black with men. I think that most of them must have drowned, for the current was strong, and the men on the bank were too intent on their own safety to offer assistance. The stampede was simply fearful. Those men had run seven miles through the rain, back to their intrenchments. One died on our sofa of sheer exhaustion, without a scratch on him. The rebels hardly paused inside the walls of the fort, but rushed on south, passing through the wilderness, and suffering terribly as they went, I have no doubt, on into Tennessee.

"Had Thomas immediately pursued the rebels, he must have annihilated their army, but he made no advance until the next day.

He kept up a galling fire, all during the retreat, however, and when the rebels were within the intrenchments, began to shell the works. That was what drove the rebels on. My father was at this time in the artillery, and had to direct the gun which played upon his own house. The bed of Mill Creek is broken up by a number of small falls. When the shelling began, we, who were within the house, mother, my sister and I, ran in behind one of these, the creek running over our heads, and the water falling at our feet. From here we saw the last boat-loads cross the river and run up the hill, only to find what they had hoped would prove a place of safety, alive with hissing, bursting shells.

"Even in the midst of the battle I saw some funny sights. One of these presented itself while we were under the falls. As the last of the rebels ran up the slope, an old negro cook, belonging to one of our neighbors, ran out of her kitchen, with her sun-bonnet in her hand and her white turban on her head. She followed the retreating rebels up the slope, and stood on the em-

bankment, waving her sun-bonnet above her head, and shouting :

"De Lawd's heerd my prar ! De Lawd's destroyed de hos' ub de 'Gyptians, an' de chillen ub Isrul is agine ter go up outer de lan' ub bondage !"

"While we had to laugh at her ridiculous appearance, we trembled for Patience, or Pape as we called her, expecting to see her killed. But she ran all the way to the fort and back to her kitchen, unharmed by that tempest of shot and shell.

"The rebels were all this time without a leader. Crittenden, of course, was useless, and Zollicoffer was killed early in the fight. Did you ever hear the war song beginning :

'Zollicoffer's dead,
And the last words he said,
Were: 'Here's another Wild Cat acoming'?

"In it is the generally believed statement :

'Up jumped Colonel Frye
And shot him in the eye,
And sent him to the happy land of Canaan.'

"I thought, perhaps, you might have heard it; but you are too young. Colonel Frye, who is still living, and has been can-

didate for lieutenant-governor of Kentucky on the Republican ticket, did not kill Zollcoffer : neither was he shot in the eye. The ball, which was of small caliber, entered his abdomen and ranged upward, having evidently been fired by a man on foot, and from an ordinary rifle. We, who remained on the ground, learned the true story. An old blacksmith in the neighborhood, (I think he is still living), had earned a dollar, and started on the morning of the battle for the store of old Mrs. Taylor to buy a pound of coffee. As he made his way along through the fog and rain, with his squirrel-rifle on his shoulder, the firing began, and he found himself surrounded, at a distance, by men, advancing on each other and closing in upon him. He ran hither and thither, seeking some way of escape, and was almost out the fight when a man on horseback rode down on him with drawn sword. Hastily cocking his gun, he fired, killing the rebel general. The rebels were too much disconcerted to seek his body, and so it was left on the field, and was first recognized by my father. War makes men bar-

barous as Indians. When the soldiers knew that the dead man was Zollicoffer, they began cutting scraps of his uniform for relics, and continued until the body was left almost naked.

"The only Christian thing I saw in it all, was the work of the surgeons. The rebel surgeons stayed after the battle, and the Union surgeons came over, and, by mutual consent, each doctor attended to the wounded in turn, without respect to rank or side. Some of the men, however, refused to be attended by the surgeons of the other army, and said they would rather die. One of Wolfert's cavalry, whose name was Grubb, and who is still living, was shot through the neck, and never was able to speak again. He lay on the field with one fist stuffed into the wound on either side, and I was giving him a drink when a rebel surgeon came and offered to dress his wound. Taking his bloody fist from his throat, the soldier shook it at the gray uniform, with a look of speechless hate, that made the rebel pass him with a curse.

"The wounded were gathered on the

hill, sheltered as well as possible from the storm. I went among them with water, for as yet there was no one to help, and the terrible gun-shot thirst was making them wild. Soon the surgeons called on me for assistance. Oh, it was horrible work! I was first called to help with a young man whose arm had been shattered by a ball, and afterward mangled by the tramp of a horse. The buttons on his sleeve had been carried through his arm, and lay in the bloody flesh and splintered bone where the ball came out. With one hand I pressed the ether to his nostrils, while I held with the other the hand of the poor, lost arm. I tried to be brave, but when the last stroke of the knife let the bloody arm fall against my dress, and the severed fingers twitched convulsively in my grasp, a feeling of unutterable horror came over me, and I turned, reeling and about to faint. The surgeon, with a terrible oath, threw in my face the bowl of dirty, bloody water in which he had washed the arm, and ordered me to hold an artery while he tied it. Too angry then to faint, and not daring to disobey him,

I assisted him in his work until three o'clock the next morning.

"Oh! What dreadful days those were! I dream of them now. I can shut my eyes and see a hundred dreadful sights which I witnessed that night, and many others afterward. I wonder how I lived through it all, and sometimes can hardly realize it, but look back at myself as if I had been another, and feel sorry for the poor girl who saw such sights and passed through such periods of trial and sorrow.

"But the thing which hurt us most of all was the conduct of some of the Union troops. They did not at first know how loyal we were, and they treated us shamefully. Father was not allowed immediately to visit and care for us, and during the interval we nearly perished. We had lived on hope for months. The approach of the Federal army was the one thing, aside from our trust in God, which made life tolerable. No one can tell the joy with which we greeted the first regiment that marched into the fort under the stars and stripes. It was a Michigan regiment. I suppose they

thought we were rebels, but they might at least have remembered that we were women. After having suffered all that we had suffered from imprisonment and anxiety, and the hardship incident to such a life as we had to lead, in the midst of the rebel army, it seemed as if we must die when we were so wronged by those who ought to have been our friends. But they scorned our professions of loyalty, ate and destroyed our provisions, insulted and abused us, and acted more shamefully toward us than the rebels ever had done. Of course, we were protected later, but for the time we were left so destitute that mother and sister lived on a few small potatoes which they picked from the swill-bucket, while I rode twenty-eight miles for a bushel of corn, for which I paid five dollars, being myself thirty-eight hours without food."

Mrs. Jackson hurried on with these reminiscences, flushed and excited, as the memory of scenes so terrible came back upon her, all too vividly. Suddenly, turning to Case, she asked, but with a momentary hesitation—

"Mr. Case: you favor some one I have seen. Had you any kin-folks in the war?"

"My father was a soldier," answered Case. "He served in sixty-one and two in the 210th Ohio. He was a mere boy, and saw little fighting, but did clerical and messenger work. He was sick for a while at Franklin, Tennessee, and was discharged on account of his health. I think he was stationed for a time in Kentucky. Do you suppose you ever met him?"

"I—I—I think, perhaps, I did—that is, it is possible. I may have met him. I met a great many men in those days. Of course, I don't remember many of them. Jessie, it is late. We must go to bed."

VI.

"Ma," said Jessie, when they were alone, "What is the matter? Why did you act so?"

"Nothing, child, nothing. I did not mean to do anything."

"But, ma, I am sure there must be something. Tell me, ma, what is it? I am a woman. Can't you trust me?"

"Why, yes, I trust you, Jessie; and I will tell you; but it is nothing—that is—don't say anything about it, dear. It is a piece of girlish foolishness—that's all. Be sensible while your a girl, Jessie, for foolishness sticks to one a long time.

"You've heard me tell of the time I rode to save your grandpa's life? Maybe you don't remember it all. Well, I have never told it quite all—but it was like this: Pa, that's your grandpa, was appointed Provost Marshal. That was after the rebels had been driven on south, and the armies were

fighting about Chattanooga. There were no rebel soldiers here ; but there were many gangs of guerillas. One evening, an hour b' sun or so, a man came to our house and told us of a plan to murder pa and plunder the wagon train with which he was coming south from Bowling Green, as he passed through the wilderness between Pine Knot and the Tennessee line. I hurriedly mounted a horse and rode to the nearest camp, but found that the telegraph lines had been interfered with, and that I could get no message to Bowling Green except from Point Burnside.

"The officer in charge told me to go back home ; that he was about to send a messenger through with dispatches to the Point, and that he would send this message also : but I would not return until I knew that the word had reached my father. So he placed me in charge of the young soldier who was to bear the dispatches.

"He was a fine looking young fellow, tall and with black eyes, and hardly a beard at all, for he was not over twenty. He looked like—like Mr. Case.

"It was a long, dark ride, and took us until near morning. But he was so kind to me—a brother couldn't have done more. He was homesick, poor fellow! He had sisters at home, he told me; and he seemed to be glad I was along.

"When we got to Point Burnside, he took me to the telegraph office, and he went to deliver his despatches. Then he came back and got me something to eat, and made me lie down in a tent close by while they were trying to find pa—for pa was at Lexington and hadn't started yet for Bowling Green to take charge of the train; so it took a long while to find him. And he had my horse cared for, and showed me the Major's message saying that this young lady was to be shown all needed attention, and returned under escort. And when the officer asked him if he was too tired to return, and whether he should send another escort, he answered up so quick, and said he preferred returning to his own camp; that he was sure the Major expected him to do so; that he wasn't tired at all; and the officer laughed and sent him back with me.

"It was about ten o'clock in the morning when we got word from pa that he'd got the message, and would secure a double escort of cavalry to accompany the train. And we started back.

"It seemed so good to be cared for. We had been alone so long, with pa gone, and no one to protect us; and I can't tell you how good it seemed to have that young man take care of me so, nor how much I got to think of him in that one night and day.

"The road back led within five miles of home, and he rode a little longer way for him, that took me to where I could see our house from a high hill three miles off. Here he left me, and I pointed out our farm to him, and he said if ever he got home alive, he would come South when the war was over, and would surely come and see me. And then when I thanked him for being so kind to me, his eyes filled with tears, and I reckon mine did, too. And I—I don't know how he came to do it, but when I held out my hand to say good-bye, he took it, and

drew me toward him in the saddle, and put his other arm around me, and kissed me.

"I don't know why I let him do it, nor why he wanted to, exactly. I was just your age then, and looked just like you, and folks used to tell me such things as they now say to you, and—and—

"Sometimes I've thought he was thinking about his sisters, and that was all he meant by it. But other times I've thought that he meant more. I heard from him a year afterwards. He wrote me a letter saying that he had been sick, and was discharged on that account, and that he hoped to come South sometime, and would come and see me. That was all he said, only to inquire how I was. And I answered the letter, but perhaps he never got it.

"I reckon he never meant anything by it, but I couldn't forget it. And when other young men came to see me, I couldn't learn to love them, and I thought it was on his account. But the war closed, and he never came, and after a while your pa came over into Wayne county, and I married him, and

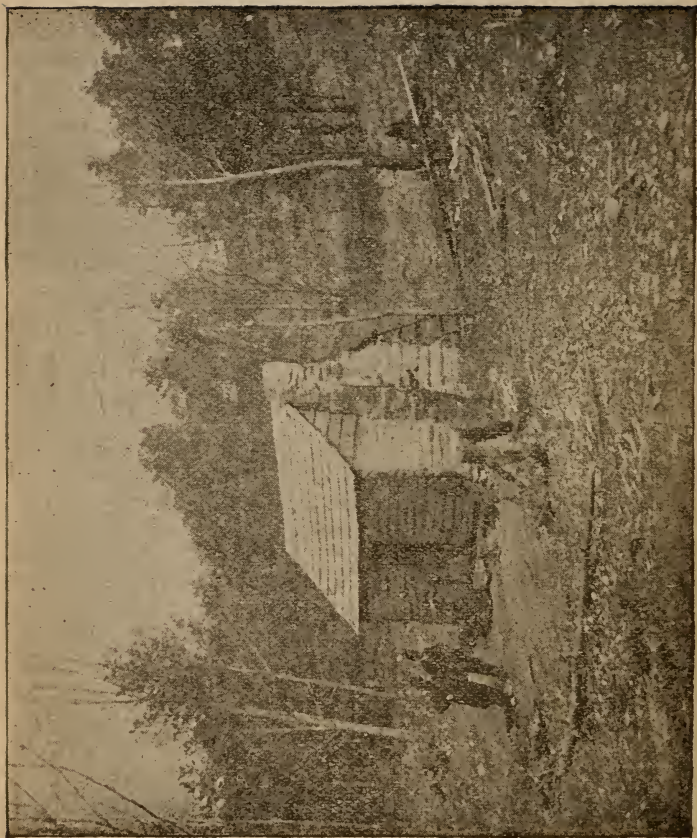
came over here to live in the woods. There! Now you know it all."

"And ma—that young soldier! What was his name?"

"His name was Case. I knew his boy as soon as I saw him and heard his name. I didn't need to ask him who his father was, but I had a notion to a dozen times, just to be sure, but I thought 'twant best. But to-night I got to talking about those days, and it all came back to me, and I asked him if his father was a soldier, and what was his regiment; and then he went on and told me just as his father did.

"Now mind you don't speak of this to any one. I've never told it before, that is, all of it. I didn't mean to tell you, but no matter. Go to bed, Jessie, it's time an hour ago."

It came to pass from this time forward that Jessie had an increased interest in Case, and a corresponding decrease of interest in Todd. It was long before Todd noticed it, for the change was gradual. But Case noticed it, and liked it, and, perhaps unintentionally, encouraged it. Mrs.



ELEAZAR VAN HORN'S CABIN.

Jackson also noticed it, and did not directly encourage, but neither did she oppose it. No further words passed between Jessie and her mother on the subject; but there are matters between women which they understand without many words; and Jessie and her mother each felt that the other had a feeling that Case might possibly have been sent to fulfill his father's promise.

VII.

Case's school opened well, and proved a most pleasant occupation. For a while there was no incident worthy of record; but after about a month, a worthy preacher removed his son from school. When interviewed on the subject, he assigned as the reason his fear that his boy would become an infidel if he continued in school. He had learned, in short, that the earth is round, and that the sun does not go around it. The affair began immediately to create some little comment in the neighborhood; and a little later it caused great excitement; for it was officially announced that there would be a debate between Rev. Simeon Pike and his friend Job Absalom Martin on the one side, and Messrs. Case and Todd on the other, on the question:

"*Resolved*, That the earth is flat and stationary, and that the sun goes around it once in twenty-four hours."

For two nights the question was argued before crowded houses. Mr. Martin, who had served a term in the penitentiary for some crime committed while away from home, (he claimed that it was for "stobbin' a man," but it was generally believed to have been for stealing), argued the matter on biblical grounds. On the second night especially his remarks were interesting. He took his stand beside Case and made swooping gestures above his head, pausing occasionally to look down on him from the corner of his eye, and clear his throat with a threatening gargle :

" He's a college graduate—ah ! An' he's come down hyur from the State of Ohlar—ah ! to larn our chillen, an' instruct us about the shape o' the yarth—ah ! An' he knows more'n Joshuar—ah ! Brethering, d'ye reckon Joshuar didn't know what he war atalkin' 'bout? Ef he'd a wanted the *yarth* to stan' still, wouldn't he asaid suthin' or other about hit—ah ! But wat does he say—ah ? SUN *stan' thou still upon Gibeon ah !* an' thou MOON in the valley of Ajalon—ah !

"But *he* knows more'n Joshuar—ah! Yes, I reckon he'd take Joshuar inter his leetle school—ah! an' larn him how ter pray, an' how ter write the Bible—ah! an' wut's the shape o' the yarth—ah! I tell ye brether-in', hits the doctring of *infidelity*—ah! an' any man that teaches hit orter be drummed out o' the kentry—ah! R-r-r-r-r-rck!"

The decision of the judges, notwithstanding this torrent of eloquence, was in favor of the school-masters by a vote of two to one. Judge Jackson voted for the round side, and so did old Eleazar Van Horn, who had formerly believed the earth flat, but was convinced by the discussion of the error of his views. At the close of the second evening, he said to Case that he believed he understood it now, but he would like Case to come home with the children from school the next night and answer a few questions on the subject, and see what was the matter with a clock that had stopped.

Case had never taken a clock apart, but was ashamed to confess that there was anything that he did not know or could not do. He went as requested, and took the clock

to pieces, carefully noticing how each wheel came out, while the whole family stood around admiring his skill.

"I tell ye, hit takes a smart man to take a clock to pieces," said Mrs. Van Horn.

"It takes a smarter one to put it together," replied Case.

"Yes, that's so," said Eleazar. "Now, I cud take that apart all right, but I'd have wheels enough to make two."

Case went on with his work, doubting whether he had wheels enough to make one, but by sheer good fortune discovered the obstruction and got the clock together again.

In the evening he set a candle on a chair to represent the sun, and showed the motions of the earth by means of a ball of yarn pierced through with a knitting needle. Before they went to bed the whole family claimed to understand the matter: then one of the boys, having retired, was told to "Lay fur back an' make room fur the teacher." The boy "laid fur back" and the teacher "laid fur for'ard," and slept till the earth revolved into sunlight again.

Eleazar Van Horn, however, did not prove a very steadfast disciple. He believed in the doctrine of the perservance of the saints, but lacked the virtue. A while afterward, Case asked him about his back-sliding, and received the following reply :

“ Wall, I’ll tell you. You made that all seem mighty plain, an’ I thought I believed it. But I warn’t easy. ’Peared lack every time the ole thing flopped over, she’d spill us off. An’ then I couldn’t make hit seem lack the Bible didn’t say the yarth had corners an’ foundations an’ eends, an’ the sun run from one eend o’ the heavens to t’other ; an’ I jes’ thought, ‘ Let God be true an’ every man a liar,’ an’ I made up my mind I didn’t want to believe it, an’ I warn’t goin’ to—an’ I haint !”

“ Well,” said Case, “ if I had lived to be as old a man as you are, and had always believed the earth flat, I don’t know that I should care to change. But don’t take your children out of school. I shall not make them infidels—I should be only too glad to lead them to be Christians. I hope they will believe the Bible as implicitly as you,

whether they understand these other matters or not. Don't disturb yourself further about this matter now. Seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and God will add all necessary astronomical information when you get to heaven."

Case attended two legal trials during the summer. One was an examining trial held in Brushville, of a man who was clearly guilty as charged, of shooting with intent to kill. At the close of twenty minutes, however, he was discharged, being simply placed under a small bond to appear at a later date and answer to the charge of carrying a pistol concealed.

The second trial was before Jackson, who was a justice of the peace. There had been trouble between Ike Harkness's sheep and Dan P'simer's dog. (Dan's full name was Picklesimer, but it was usually abbreviated both in speech and writing). Ike, seeing that the sheep was getting the worst of it, had interfered, and shot the dog. Dan had Ike arrested for malicious mischief: Ike sued Dan for the value of the sheep. Four lawyers were employed.

Half the county attended the trial. Ike summoned all his friends to testify to the bad character of the dog and the peaceable disposition of the sheep. Dan had as large a crowd ready to defend the reputation of the dog, and, if necessary, impeach that of the sheep. For three days the trial continued. On Saturday, the third day, they decided to compromise, and asked the Judge to dismiss both cases, with a judgment for costs against each party. While the Judge was making on his docket the entry, "boath cases Dismissed Each feller paying there Own costis," the witnesses and jurors began to give the amount of their fees to the men who had summoned them. The Judge encouraged this.

"Come, Dave," he said to one man who held back, "they're neighbors, yer know. Holp 'em ter settle hit up so they won't be no more hereafter nor wut they has ter be. Hit'll cost 'em enough at the best. Throw off yer costis."

"Jedge," replied the witness, "I'm a pore man, an' was aworkin' at a dollar a day, an' they come an' tuck me away. All I ast

is fer them ter gin me wut I'd a arnt ef they'd ahad more sense."

"I've hed a dollar's wuth o' fun every day," suggested another witness, in reply to the first, "'Pears lack hit wouldn't be har'ly right ter charge the fellers fur hit."

"O, yes!" said the lawyers to the reluctant witness, "throw off yer costs, an' make hit easy fur yer neighbors ter settle."

"Say!" said the witness, "I'll throw off my fee ef the lawyers 'll throw off their'n!"

"Thet wouldn't be far," returned one of the lawyers. "We ort to hev our fees. We had to lie harder'n you done."

"Yes, but by gummies! I hed ter swar ter my lies!"

But at length all the costs were thrown off excepting the Judge's bill, and the fees of the lawyers. When Case went into the house, (for the trial was held in the yard), he found Todd, who had come over to attend the trial, paying no attention to that exciting event, but seated inside reading a long poem to Jessie and her mother. Case greeted him with scant civility, and taking down the Judge's rifle, went to the

woods, very much annoyed. He was not jealous, he said to himself, but he wondered what they could find to admire in that fellow or his doggerel.

VIII.

Such other facts as interest us concerning the progress of our story, appear in the following letters :

FROM CASE TO PARSONS.

CUTSHIN, KY., September 25.

My dear Parsons:

I enjoyed hugely your last with its account of your success along Kinniconick. You, who doubted whether books could be sold in the mountains, are likely to enter the law-school as opulent as Bird-o'-freedom Sawin expected to be when he returned from Mexico. I shall not have so much money, but expect to bear you company. If you become too rich and proud to take me as your chum, may I not go as your valet?

My school work continues interesting and spicy. The man who wrote of the teacher, "*Una dies vitam continet*," never

taught on Cutshin. Today, for instance, Jim Whittaker went out, and as he passed along by the side of the house, Jack Berry kicked at him through a crack. Jim caught his foot and held it, and each boy tried to pull the other through the crack. Crack one size too small, so the boys see-sawed back and forth, (like the snake in the pantry, who swallowed an egg, stuck his head through a jug-handle and swallowed another, and was unable either to proceed or withdraw), till swift retribution overtook them both.

Such things keep the school-master from perishing of *ennui*. I always punish them severely, but I like to have them happen.

I have one little fellow who is a perfect incubator for fun. His name is Cicero, but that is not the way he spells it. He belongs to a family of ten, none of whom could tell me their ages when I enrolled them. I told them to ask their parents to teach them their ages that I might enter them on the register. It was too much of an undertaking for the good people: so they sent me the family record, made out on a sheet of

note paper pasted into "Baxter's Call,"—their entire library. From this I discovered that Cicero is twelve years old, and that his name ought to be spelled, "Cysarough." I did not at once give that boy credit for all there is in him. I had no idea that a little, peaked, dirty-faced, sad-eyed boy, weighted down with such a name, could rise to the performance of any greater deed than the blowing of paper wads through a cane stalk. I first obtained an idea of his capacity from an essay on Pocahontas, filled with delightful little anachronisms like this :

"hur paw wiped his ise with his Hankercher & sed i Am Sorrow Toe let U Go i had done lade out fur Toe Kill U but i wil Doe hit fur Toe pleas pokeyhontiss."

I could imagine the picture which the scene presented to that boy's imagination—old Powhattan in modern attire, seated on a log, using a large bandana, weeping tears the size of a gum drop.

Since that time I have gone home every night marveling at the inventive genius of that "amusin littel seraph," as Artemus Ward called his kangaroo.



"FUR TOE PLEAS POKEYHONTISS."

The big boys and girls have been courting on the sly. I have thought it wise to let matters alone until some overt act should occur, and then descend with one foul swoop and inflict such dire punishment as to arrest matters at once. Last Monday I caught a couple in the act of kissing. Several of the children also saw the act, and began to laugh. I called the couple for-

ward and commanded the school to be quiet. Said I—

“ You act as if you felt ashamed of yourselves. You need not be. You may kiss each other whenever you wish. I do not suppose you knew how willing I am to have you do so, or you would not have been so sly about it. The next time, you need make no effort to conceal it. I will stop all the exercises and let you kiss each other whenever you desire. To show you how willing I am that you should do this, I wish you now to repeat the act in the presence of the school.”

That took all the fun out of it. They stood hesitating for a long time. I kept the school perfectly quiet, but the children were ready to explode with compressed mirth. The affectionate young man began to cry. Just then Cysarough held up his hand. Somewhat impatient at the interruption, I asked what he wanted.

“ Mr. Case,” he replied, meekly, “ ’Pears lack he’s furgot how he done it. Don’t yer reckon yer could show him—sorter?”

I find that other teachers dismiss school

for a week in "fodder-pullin'," but as I begun late, I shall hasten to a close. The school house is so open that we can but suffer after cold weather begins.

You ask about the Judge's daughter. She is well. I am becoming somewhat of a rival of the poet—just in fun, you know. I think I compare very favorably with him in her estimation, excepting that I can't write poetry. Can't you help me? You used to compose verses when in college—vile stuff, I thought them. Why not write me a poem and transfer copyright, authorship and all to me for a consideration?

Good-bye. Be good to yourself.

Your friend,

N. A. CASE.

FROM PARSONS TO CASE.

KINNICONICK, KY., Sept. 30.

My dear Case:

Your letters and those from home are the best part of my present existence. Thank you for writing so promptly. Letters don't amount to much to a fellow situated as you are, with a pleasant boarding place and a

pretty girl to drive dull care away, but they mean something to a fugitive and vagabond, wandering over the earth with the Cain's mark of a subscription book under his arm, so that it comes to pass that every one that findeth him desireth to slay him. Write often as you can, and write at greater length. You've little else to do.

I have just been wofully beaten. I had begun to flatter myself that I could sell books to blind men,—(I have sold to one or two who can't read)—and that I had the points well learned. I begin to doubt it. Yesterday about 4:30 P. M. I accosted a man plowing in his field. He said he had no time to look at my book.

"Well," said I, "You sit down and look at the book while I plow around your field."

I plowed around, and seeing that he was busy reading, thought well not to disturb him. Bless me if he didn't keep me plowing till six o'clock. I didn't care. It was as easy walking there as in the road, and I knew that he would have to keep me over night. When we got to the house, he resumed his reading, and was hard at it when

I went to bed. I noticed that the whole family seemed to be of a literary turn. The good woman of the house talked to me of Dante while rolling out her terra cotta biscuits ; and the son and heir having borrowed



a paper from me, read studiously by the light of a lamp made by a lighted rag in an egg shell of grease, balanced in a tea cup of corn meal. When interrupted he looked up with a snarl so ill-natured that I fancied he might with proper culture become a Car-

lyle. I knew that I should sell a book there. Whether my host went to bed or not, I do not know; but he was reading when I came to breakfast. When we were called to the table he closed the book with a long drawn sigh.

"Well, sir," said I, as I was about to leave, "I'm glad you like my book so well. What binding shall I bring you?"

"Stranger," he replied, "I haint got no use fur yer book. I've rud 'er through!"

You ask me to furnish you a poem. When I write any love poetry, it shall be in the interest of ye book-agent and not ye pedagogue. Perhaps you can adapt the following lines to your use:—

O, never, dearest one, expel,
Him who the lightning-rod doth sell;
And for thy lover's sake treat well
The pill and polish vender.
And sweeten thou the cup of woe
Of him who doth abooking go;
On him thy tenderest words bestow—
If not thy legal tender.

No, sir: I'll be no Bacon, writing verses for you to make yourself famous, and then

die myself, vainly hoping for some Donnelly to decipher my cryptogram. Write your own poetry, or flirt in prose.

By the way, Case : I know you are honorable, and all right, but you know " Evil is wrought by want of thought," etc., etc., Remember that the Judge's daughter isn't a confirmed flirt like some of the girls you knew in college. And it may be that even the feelings of our mutual friend, the poet, are worthy of consideration. Pardon the suggestion : of course, it isn't needed, but no matter. I find I must close.

Yours most sincerely,

RICHARD L. PARSONS.

P. S.—As one wire absorbs electricity by crossing near another connected with a battery, I find myself impelled to write in rhyme whenever I receive your letters. It must be that our Fodderstack poet charges you, and I absorb the spirit of the muse " by induction," as electricians say. See inclosed verses.

R. L. P.

KINNICONICK.

Oh! Know ye the stream where the spruce green and towering
Looks down on its image in pure crystal made,
Where the vine covered oak and the beech, dark and lowering
Make night black with shadows and noon blest with shade?
There the sycamore tree and the butternut grow,
And the dew from their branches makes ripples below;
And the birch and the willow grow slender and thick
On Kinney, dear Kinney, sweet Kinniconick.

There lives Jonas Sargent, whose name is far sounded,
For many a marvelous, self-published freak;
By him was the city of Jonasville founded,
And I think he asserts that he started the creek.
'Tis there that the spring gushes forth from the hill,
And the Jonasville street is the bed of the rill.
Ere long it becomes "a right smart of a creek,"
That Kinney, dear Kinney, sweet Kinniconick.

The state legislature declares navigation
Is easy and pleasant on Kinney's fair stream;
Thus making a river by sage legislation
A matter both simple and easy would seem.
But a vote of two thirds of the state legislature
Don't pass a bill over the veto of nature;
The shoals are so frequent, obstructions so thick,
A minnow can't navigate Kinniconick.

Along its green valley the corn-fields are waving
And bowing their plumes to the breeze as it blows:
Dame Nature her wealth in the kernels is saving,
And these are the methods by which the corn goes:
The boys take the grinding on horseback to mill;
The men often run it, 'tis said, through a still:
The women make dodgers as hard as a brick,
And feed them to agents on Kinniconick.

- 'Tis there the tobacco leaves, lengthy and sweeping,
Extend their vile breath to the sunlight and dew.
'Tis there that the urchins, who scarce are done creeping,
Run after the agent and beg for a chew.
'Tis there the old women, in witch-like attire,
Sit smoking and spitting at night by the fire;
And lovely young maidens take snuff on a stick,
On Kinney, dear Kinney, sweet Kiniconnick.
- 'Tis there that the melons are peacefully growing,
With shining black seeds in the rich, crimson meat;
The mouth begins watering, the appetite glowing,
O'er half lunar slices all dripping and sweet.
The urchin devoureth his ill-gotten treasure,
And howls with the colic as pain follows pleasure—
For too many melons will make a boy sick—
On Kinney, dear Kinney, sweet Kinniconick.
- Dear Kinney ! the home of the festive mosquito,
Which lurks in the forest and lights on your nose,
And gently, but firmly, affixes his veto
Whene'er the house passes a bill for repose !
And chiggers as small as the point of a pin,
Commit every day a whole acre of sin.
The flea is abundant, and so is the tick,
But worst is the bed bug on Kinniconick.
- 'Tis there that the bull-dog's loud menacing baying
Combines with the deep echoed bark of the hound,
To make known the fact that a peddler is straying,
Or a bad looking book-agent coming around.
The shepherd dog rushes, with vertical fur,
And the rat and tan seconds the move of the cur;
The agent's hair rises, he hunts for a stick,
For he feareth the fauna of Kinniconick.

Alas for the man, who, by poverty banished,
Sells books along Kinney for raiment and bread!
His young life is blighted, his fond hopes have vanished,
'Twere better for him and the world were he dead.
Though bacon and corn-dodger help him along,
Green beans are abundant and coffee is strong,
Yet dogs are so hungry, mosquitos so thick,
That life has its drawbacks on Kinniconick.

IX.

Todd began to feel a little less at home at Jackson's. Still, not being a man of quick perception, he less than half realized Case's dislike and Jessie's growing coldness. He came less frequently than before, and when he came, found Jessie's interest in his poetry, not altogether lacking, but somewhat diminished. His verses, though less abundant, were rather more direct. He did not address them to her, nor say anything which necessarily referred to her, but there was much between the lines. Any other man would have come directly to the point long before : but Todd delighted to stand at a distance and worship his idol in words that half concealed his meaning. At this distance she seemed to him something immeasurably above him, a fairy-queen, an angel, a demi-goddess. He had a feeling, however, which he never would have admitted to himself, that, after all, she

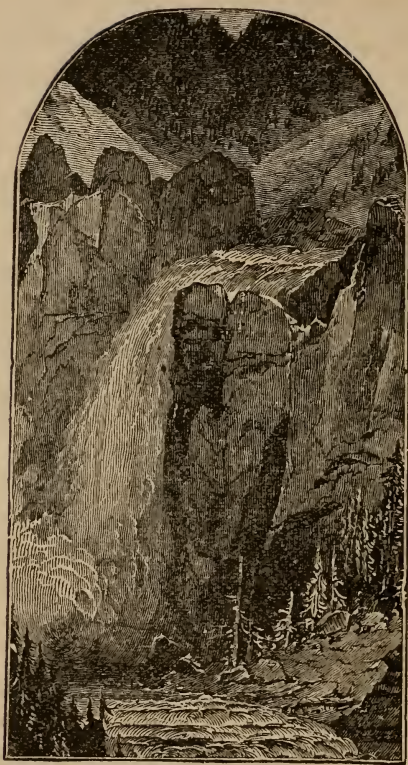
was only a woman, and differed from other members of her sex in the degree of her virtues only, and he shrank from a nearer view lest it might reveal her humanity. He stooped again and again to pick the bud which seemed within his reach, but as often withdrew his hand with an instinctive feeling that it might wither in his grasp. He had in his cabin a score of poems in which he told his love : he threatened within himself to place himself beneath her single sash window on the very next pleasant night and sing " Sweet Jessie," which, ever since the night when Case had taught him the tune, seemed, in its demand for expression, like a Minerva in his brain. But he kept his poems in his cabin and his song in his heart. Just now, indeed, for some reason which he could hardly explain, the time seemed inopportune, yet he never doubted that she loved him ; he did not admit for a moment that she was changing ; he never thought of a Case as a supplanter.

Late in the autumn occurred the annual meeting of the Wilderness Association, held this year with the church in the Lower

Regions, near Cumberland Falls. A large crowd from Cutshin and Hellfursartin, from Fodderstack and Gable Peak, from Lickskilllet and Brushville and Ground Hog's Glory, attended this important gathering. The people of the Lower Regions had not seen so large a crowd since the war. Todd dismissed his school to attend the meeting : Case wanted to do likewise when he found that Judge Jackson and Jessie were going ; but he had begun his school so late in the summer that he needed to teach every day to finish before winter. Indeed, he had taught several Saturdays, and announced that he would continue to do so until the end of the term. The meeting of the Association proper was a small affair, and was conducted by the delegates in the school-house. But the vast audience, seated in a cove in the mountain side, were harangued day after day by the preachers in attendance. No ancient monarch ever had a grander amphitheater. The basin in the hill side was elliptical in form, with its focus at the stand. Huge beech trees, trimmed up to give a view of the pulpit from every

part of the slope, furnished a magnificent canopy of faded leaves. Few people sat all through a session. There was constant entering and departing : and all day long there flowed from the amphitheater to the spring, a stream of thirsty humanity, who found the weather, if not the sermons, dry. But all day, from 10 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., the fence-rail seats were filled, while the best preachers in attendance poured forth argument and exhortation and entreaty.

Todd spent less time at the meetings than at the cataract. The rapid rush of the stream above the falls ; the crowding of the waters to the brink ; the mad plunge ; the great white and green and blue sheet of falling water, a curtain of pearl and emerald and sapphire, ever changing yet ever the same ; the white, boiling, seething, whirling pool below, where the waters were broken into foam and spray and bubbles ; and the cloud of mist, carried hither and thither, bearing the rainbow on its crest ; all this to him was poetry and music, and almost worship. On the first day, as he emerged from behind the falls, and clam-



bered out over the slippery rocks to a place of safety in the gorge below, and looked up at the high mountains on either side of the

stream, he saw, on the bluff above him, the figure of a woman—Jessie Jackson. Standing alone on a high rock, she appeared to him the statue of an angel on a rocky pedestal, while the rainbow that played about her seemed a halo of glory. For a while he stood admiring her, until she turned to go, and then he climbed up the almost perpendicular bluff and joined her. She had never seen the falls, and had remained behind a party who had taken them in at a glance and passed on, that she might drink in the beautiful scene. She was not sorry to see Todd, for the magnificent view awoke within her emotions which she wanted some one else to express. Together they sat on a rock near the cataract while he told her how the waters come down from Lodore, and pointed out all the points of interest, and broke forth in expressions which charmed her. The next day, Saturday, they came again to the falls, with a party of young people, who listened wonderingly to the poet's words as he showed them the rock in which silver had been found, and guided them over the path down the bluff,

and told them of Niagara, of which he had read much, and quoted poetry of famous writers, and recited verses of his own. Again she realized as she had not for months, his greatness of mind and heart. She sat with him in the meeting on Sunday, and allowed him to ride beside her on the way home. Several times she looked for Case, remembering that he had promised to come on Saturday evening, but she did not find him, and was surprised, although she hoped to see him, to find how little she missed him.

Case had never found teaching so hard as during those three days. He wanted to dismiss school and go to the meeting. Thursday and Friday were long days, but he made a very short one of Saturday, and started early in the afternoon on a wild and stubborn mule for the falls.

It is a long ride at the best, but it seemed to him much longer than it really is. After riding until he thought he must be nearly there, he inquired the way of a barefoot man, and learned that he had still twelve miles to ride. With a groan he touched the

spur to his mule and rode on. After a long time he met a girl wearing a pair of boots, which possibly belonged to the man he had seen. She knew nothing about the falls, nor anything else. Two miles further he met a man in a wagon.

"Howdy!" he called, "Am I on the way to the falls?"

"Yas, sir; straight road all the way thar. Yer caint miss hit."

"How far is it?"

"Twelve miles from whar ye air now."

This did not seem like very rapid progress, but he kept on, hoping that the last man was mistaken. The "straight road" wound along creeks and up mountains, and down into deep valleys into which the mountaineers say you must carry your sunshine in a bucket, and by good fortune chose each time the right fork of the "straight-for'ard road," and listened for the waterfall, which now must be very near. At last he paused at the fork of the road. Which way should he take? For a long time he had not seen a man, but now one appeared with a gun on his shoulder.

"How far is it to the falls?" he asked.

"Jes' twelve mile, stranger," said the hunter.

"Twelve miles! It has been twelve miles for the last twenty-four! Are the falls twelve miles from every point on the globe?"

"Caint tell ye 'bout thet; but you'll find hit's all o' twelve mile from hyur."

"I can't get there before dark, can I? Are there any roads to lead me wrong?"

"Wall, they's roads, but they won't lead ye wrong ef ye don't follow 'em. Jes' keep the big road—the straight-for'ard road fur twelve mile, an' you'll be thar."

Again he settled himself in his saddle and went forward, but resolved to destroy the next man who should tell him that he was twelve miles from the falls. The sun went down, and the nearly full moon peeped over the mountain, as though playing hide and seek with the sun, and hoping to catch him in the valley. Another fork in the straight-for'ard road. Case turned to the right, but looking back in hesitation, saw a guide-board which had escaped his

first look for some indication of the way. Riding back to the board, he read in the moonlight the words carved in the wood with a knife—

CoMqoRlAiN fAlls

12 Ms.

From here the road became less plain, and for several miles followed a ridge on which the only sign of life, so far as he could discover, was one small cabin, with a triangular corn-field somewhat larger than a flat-iron. Learning that he was on the right road, and now less than twelve miles from the falls, he went on, very tired, but more courageous. The moon was bright, and the leaves had fallen enough to make the finding of the road not much harder than in daylight—which, however, is not saying much. At last he began to descend the mountain: he must be approaching the river. But there was still another mountain to cross, and it seemed a very long and steep one. Houses began to appear more frequently. Tired and hungry, and finding that his mule was failing to respond to

the spur, he halted at one of these and hallooed several times.

There was something going on inside which at first rendered it impossible for the people to hear him ; he listened : it was a man preaching. Case had shouted several times, and each time louder, before he discovered the nature of the noise within, and was at length answered by the owner of the cabin. There was no night meeting at the grove, this man told him : the people were too widely scattered ; but there were several neighborhood meetings, of which this was one. Wouldn't he 'light and stay all night ? They were middling full, but they could stand another, if he could stand the crowding. He was only a mile from the falls, and could easily walk over in the morning. So Case put up his mule and went in, thankful that the meeting must be well in progress ; for he sorely needed his supper.

The preacher was an old man with a kindly face and voice, and a look in his eye which seemed alternately like inspiration and insanity. He was describing his conversion in early life, and went on from

that to a remarkable experience through which he had passed a few years back.

"An' 'bout that time, brethering, I was tuck with a fever, an' got wuss an' wuss, an' was outer my head, an' my victuals wouldn't stay by me, an' the doctors gin me up ter die. Oh, brethering! they didn't know wut ailed me! They thought hit war a fever, but hit warn't! An' then I laid fur three weeks, an' they couldn't see nary sign o' life. They worked over me, an' done everything they cud, but hit didn't do no good. But, brethering, my soul warn't in my body! I knowed whar hit war, an' they didn't! I war caught up lack Paul inter heaven, brethering, an' seed things hit taint lawful to utter! I looked back an' seed my pore ole sick body alayin' thar, an' them aworkin' round hit, an' a leanin' over hit, an' acryin' an' aweepin' about hit, but I didn't keer nothin' 'bout hit. I knowed hit war mine, an' I should need hit in the resurrection—I hadn't no idy o' needin' hit afore—an' I felt sorter sorry fur the folks that war afeelin' bad 'bout hit, but

I knowed I warn't thar! I war removed from yearth's 'scenes an' unseens!

"I reckon yer want ter know wut hit war lack whar I went. I caint tell ye all, brethering, no more'n Paul cud. But hit war lack this. I'il hatter git down on my knees ter mark hit out, but thet haint no trouble ter me: I spen' a heap o' my time on my knees. Wy, hit war round, wut I seed, jest this away, an' hit war divided inter four kingdoms: here's this crack arunnin' this away, that cut hit in two in the middle, an' this row o' nails cut hit t'other way, an' made hit inter four kingdoms. Here's whar I war tuck fust, inter this kingdom. That's this world. An' I seed a great crowd o' people arunnin' an' apushin' an' ascrougin' over hyur to-wards this kingdom. O my Lord! how they hurried an' pushed, an' 'peared lack they war atryin' fur ter see who cud git thar fust! An' I went in thar a leetle piece—I cudn't git fur, nur didn't want—'but I seed thet thet war hell in thar! An' I seed 'em when they crossed the line, an' all they clo'es drapped orfum 'em when they got right hyur. An'

they looked all white fur jest a minute, jest lack other folks: but in jest a minute they begun ter come black spots on 'em—a spot fur every sin! O sinner! I reckon yer don't know how sin blacks a soul! I seed some men thet I knowed, thet brags 'bout how good they is, but I didn't see ary one on 'em but war so black they warn't no place ter put another black spot, an' most on 'em looked lack the spots war four or five deep, they war so black! You never seed a nigger so black as the souls that I seed agoin' in thar. An' they went down, an' down, an' down, outer sight behine a black curtain! But over the top o' thet curtain war the rainbow. Thet means hope. I tuck jest one look in thar, an' thet war enough fur me. O, brethering, wen I seed the condition o' them lost an' ruined souls, an' remembered how nigh I hed come to bein' thar myself, I war all o' a trimble! Oh! 'peared lack ter me, ef I cud jest git back ter tell my neighbors an' my neighbor's chillen wut I'd seed, 'peared lack hit wouldn't be hard ter persuade 'em ter lay aside every weight an' the sin thet doeth so

easily upset 'em, an' try ter keep away from hell! But Oh! I found hit war jes' lack wut Abraham said ter the rich man, 'Ef they won't hear Moses an' the prophets, neither will they believe ef one come back from the dead!' Folks says I'm crazy! They haint afeared ter sell me corn, an' swap hosses with me—I haint too crazy ter do business—but wen I tell 'em wut I seed in the other world, they say I'm crazy! They say my sickness done hit! Wy, do yer know, atter thet sickness, 'peared lack I warn't the same man! I'd often wanted ter read the Bible, but I never hed no chance ter go ter school, an' seemed lack I'd give one eye ef I cud read God's book with the t'other un! Atter I got well, I tuck down the Bible, an' I found I cud read! Yes sir! I cud read! I cudn't read ter do much good, but I cud read enough ter make out the sense, an' I only knowed the letters afore! Does thet look lack my sickness hed made me crazy? Oh, I haint crazy! Hit's God's truth thet I'm tellin' you! I seed hit!

" But I jest wanter tell yer one more thing

'bout thet kingdom. Some folks says they's leetle babies in hell. Now I looked p'tic'lar ter see. They may be some thar, but I didn't see none, an' I looked sharp! I didn't see none, an' I tell ye, I don't believe they's ary un thar. Everybody I seed war old enough ter akep' out o' thar.

"An' then I come over inter this kingdom. Thet's whar the Savior is. I caint tell ye much 'bout thet place, but I went all round. An' I seed a angel astannin' at the out aide o' thet kingdom aholdin' one end o' a iron rod thet retched out inter the kingdom of the world. An' I seed a book tied ter the rod, an' thet's the law of Moses. Then furder down in the world they's the book of the prophets. An' furder down they's the book of the Lord Jesus. An' furder down they's a table—thet's the communion-table, an' hit represents the church. An' all them is tied ter thet rod—the law an' the prophets an' the gospel an' the church. An' His word haint agoin' ter return ter Him void: fur when the angel liftis up thet rod, the Bible come with hit, an' the angel is agoin' ter shout: 'The kingdoms of this world are

become the kingdoms of our Lord an' of His Christ, an' He shall reign forever an' ever.'

"But this place whar the Savior is, haint the final home of the blest. Everybody thet dies in the full triumph of a livin' faith goes thar. When hit's all full—an' hit's afillin' up mighty fast—they're all agoin' over inter this kingdom: thet's the Father's house. I cudn't go in thar. They's a p'tition made outer matched lumber, an' painted jest as purty—color lack the color of a dove; an' flesh an' blood caint go apast thar. But I clim up some stars ter whar they's a winder sawed through, an' I cud look in. Oh, brethering! I seed wut John seed! An' wut he tells 'bout is jest the *fust* one! They is steps rises over hyur, thisaway, an' thisaway, an' thisaway, an' every-one o' 'em is a mansion prettier than the last! I caint tell ye nothin' 'bout thet. Eye hath not seen nor ear heerd, neither hath hit entered inter the heart of man! When we begin ter sorter git tard o' the fust mansion, we all go up ter the second, an' then on ter the nex' an' on, an' on, ter all eternity: an'

we never git ter the last one, but keep ago-
in' on from glory ter glory, worlds without
end—worlds without end—worlds without
end—

AMEN ! AMEN !”

X.

After breakfast on Sunday morning, Case walked out to see the falls and surrounding scenery. About the time for the morning service, he started through the woods for the place of meeting. Finding a creek in his way, he walked along its bank until he came to a collection of drift-wood which seemed to offer a safe crossing. In the middle of the stream, however, a log turned beneath his feet, and threw him into the water, where he was in great danger of being sucked by the current under the drift. Clinging to the log, he kept his head above water, and at length, wet from head to foot, regained the shore. The people of the house where he had stayed had gone to meeting, leaving at home the old colored cook. She laughed heartily at his appearance, but almost in the same breath expressed gratitude to Providence for his preservation, and tendered him her services.

Then he sat in such garments as she could find for him, while she rinsed, dried and pressed his clothing, and washed her morning's dishes, squeezing out the cloth after each dish, and wiping with the same rag with which she washed them; and told him stories of her life "befo' the s'rendah," and sang him slave songs and camp-meeting melodies. The time would have passed pleasantly enough had he not wanted to be elsewhere. As it was, his clothes seemed to dry very slowly: and it was two o'clock before he again started for the auditorium.

Along time he stood looking over the congregation for Jessie, and for some time without success. Brother Dozier finished his sermon, and Brother Skinner, a lame man with a very dirty shirt, and teeth that showed the use of tobacco, rose and spoke thus:

"My brethering, you'll fine my tex' somers in the Bible, an' I haint agoin' ter tell yer whar: but hit's thar. Ef yer don't believe hit, you jest take down yer Bible an' hunt tell yer fine hit, an' you'll fine a heap more thet's good, too. My tex' is this:

"'On this rock will I build my church,

an' the gates of hell shall not prevail against hit.'

"Now, I'm agoin' ter speak the truth ter-day no matter who it hits. Ef they's ary man in this aujience thet don't agree with me, thet's his lookout, an' not mine. The question fur us ter answer about this tex' is this: Wut church war hit thet the Lord founded? Wut church is hit thet the gates of hell haint agoin' ter prevail against? I'm agoin' ter answer thet question; an' I'll tell yer wut church hit is; hit's the Ole Hard-shell Babtist church, thet's wut church hit is.

"A heap o' people says hit war the Christian church. Well, hit warn't. The Campbellites says they're Christians: the Methodis' says, 'We're Christians, too.' Wall, I haint a Christian: I'm a Baptist! I fine in the Bible thet the diciples war fust called Christians at Antioch. Not at Jerusalem. The Lord never called the church Christians, nur no person else thet had ary rightter gin the church a name. The Lord founded the church when He went down

inter the warter, an' the gates of hell shall not prevail against hit.

"My brethering, wen Samuel went down ter' 'noint David, he tuk some oil. Wen he got thar, he poured hit on David's head. Wut did he hev it in? Wut did he hev the oil in? Oh! let ary Methodis' ur Campellite tell me, wut did he tote thet oil in? Twarnt a gourd. Twarnt a tin. Twarnt a cup. Twarnt a glass. Tuz a HORN! Now a horn's the symbol of strength. Ye caint bend 'er—ah! Ye caint break 'er—ah! Ye caint split 'er—ah! She's jest lack a ole HARDSHELL BABTIST—AH. Now my brethering, I've heerd thet they's jist six hundred an' sixty-six different churches an' sorts of churches in the world—ah, an' I tell you thet six hundred an' sixty-five er them is wrong—ah! An' the un thet haint wrong—ah: is the *ole*—ah! HARDSHELL BABTIST—AH!

"Neow they's a heap o' people don' lack the doctring of this hyur church cuz we teach predestination. Now I want er tell you. Them folks is jest lack a ole hoss—ah! thet you've worked hard all day at the

plow—ah. You fotch him out at night—ah !
an' you go fur to carry him home—ah. An'
you come up nigh onter a ole blach stump—
ah, a settin' by the side of the road—ah !

"An' wen the ole hoss sees it he stops—ah !
An' his yurs pints right straight at the
stump—ah ! an' every har on his back pints
right straight at his yurs—ah ! an' he sez :
' Thar he is—ah ! Thar's the booger—ah !
Oh ! he'll ruin me—ah !' An' thar he
stan's—ah ! with his laigs stiff lack fence-
rails—ah ! an' ye caint git him apast that
ole stump—ah ! But ef you've got a good
strong bridle—ah ! yer kin git him up fer-
nent hit—ah ! an' then he gives a great
snort—so—*boo—oooh!*—an' goes by hit with
a jump—ah ! an' twarn't nothin' but a stump
none of the time. Now brethering, they
haint no more harm in the doctring of the
ole Hardshell Babtist church—ah ! than they
is in thet ole stump—ah !

"Now look ahere—ah ! We fine wen we
read the Scriptures of divine truth—ah !
thet Solomon he built a temple—ah ! an' he
hed all the work done way off—ah : so
they warn't no sound of hammer to be heerd

at the buildin'—ah! An' the timber war ahewed—ah, an' asquared—ah, an' aplumed—ah, way out in the mountings—ah! an' then King Solomon he gin orders—ah! fur ter make the timbers up inter raftis—ah! an' float 'em down ter Joppy—ah! Now, jes' supposing some of 'em ar' workmen hed a said—ah! one of the hewers o' wood, 'r the drawers o' warter hed a said—ah! 'I'll squar' this timber—ah! an' I'll plumb hit—ah, but taint while fur me ter immerse hit all over in the water—ah! I'll jis' take a leetle warter—ah! an' sprinkle on them timbers—ah! Thet'll do jist as well—ah! Hit taint no savin' orjince nohow—ah: How do yer reckon them timbers wud agot down ter Joppy—ah! An' ef the timbers hadn't agot thar, how'd Solomon abuilt the temple—ah? An' now, ef you're atryin' ter git ter heaven—ah, how do you reckon you'll git thar ef you stay on the bank a sprinklin' warter on yourself—ah! an' on leetle babies thet haint repented of thur sins—ah! stidder goin' down INto the warter—ah? Do yer reckon you'll ever git thar? No sir—ah! You mought as well

make a church outter the devils in hell as o' thet sorter people—ah! Fur on this rock I will build my church—ah! an' the gates of hell shall not prevail against hit—ah!

" But Oh! my brethering—ah! How well I remember—ah! jis' lack hit war yistidy—ah! the time wen I foun' the Lord—ah! A heap o' people sez they caint tell the time—ah! nur the place—ah! Wull, I reckon they caint—ah! Kase they haint never *aben* no time an' place—ah! Ef a man's hed peace spoke to his never-dyin' soul, he kin mighty soon tell the time 'n' the place—ah! Oh! I remember hit well—ah! I war twenty-one an' agoin' on twenty-two year of age—ah! An' I went ter meetin'—ah! an' I went home afeelin' mighty bad kase some o' the gals hed slighted me—ah! kase I war lame—ah! An' I felt bad thet they wouldn't show me as much 'tention as t'other young men thet war cumridges o' mine—ah! An' agoin' hum—ah, I rode off by myself—ah! ter go hum by a roundabout way—ah! O my brethering—ah! I reckon I war a feelin' sorter lack poor ole Joner—ah! lack I'd love ter go off in the ships of Tarshish—ah! An' I

felt jist lack I wouldn't akeered p'tic'lar ef hit hed aben the whale's belly—ah!

"Wull I got out on the mounting—ah, an' 'peared lack I couldn't go home—ah. An' I got off my hoss an' sot down under a hick'ry tree—ah, afeelin' lack 'Lijah wen he sot under the juniper tree—ah, awishin' he cud die—ah. An' awhilest I war thar, they come up a powerful big storm—ah, an' my nag got loose an' I couldn't ketch her, an' off she went fur home—ah! aleavin' me on the mounting—ah. Oh! my brethering how hit thundered—ah! An' 'peared lack the hull sky war one streak o' lightnin'—ah. An' the limbs commenced a blowin' off'n the trees—ah! An' the trees began a bendin'—ah! An' the warter come down in sheets—ah, an' wet me to the skin—ah! Now I jist want to tell you I got over wantin' to die, mighty soon—ah! Oh! then I begun ter realize thet they's somethin comes atter death—ah, an' I warn't ready fur hit—ah! Oh, my brethering, I thought I'd prayed before—ah, but I found thet night I hadn't never done it before—ah! I prayed an' prayed, an' every streak o' lightnin' I thought

I could see an angry God above me, an' a yawnin' hell below me—ah! But right wile the storm war aragin'—ah, an' the lightnin' war aflashin'—ah, and the thunder war acrackin'—ah, the Lord spoke peace to my never-dyin' soul—ah. I seed the lightnin' but hit didn't skeer me. I heerd the thunder, but I warn't afeared no more. I felt the rain asoakin' me, but peared lack hit didn't wet me then. I jist felt lack singin'; and I sung an' prayed an' shouted thar all night, an' they foun' me in the mornin' an' come to whar I war by them ahearin' me a singin'. Thet war thirty-two year ago the fourteenth day o' this month, an' I kin jis shet my eyes an' see the place whar I foun' the Lord. I cud go to thet ole hick'ry tree the darkest night the Lord ever made. An' wen they axed wut church I'd jine, I sez, sez I, 'Lemme jine the Babtist,' sez I; 'not the Missionary Babtist, nor the reg'lar Babtist, but the ole Two Seed, Iron-Jacket, Predestination, Hardshell Babtist—ah!' For on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it—ah!

"But Oh ! my brethering—ah ! we fine thet a heap of them thet's in the church is mighty nigh as bad as them thet's out ; an' some Babtists haint much better'n' other churches. The world's a waxin' wuss an' wuss an' pears lack the eend haint fur off. Wy, the Babtists over in Laurel thar aroun' me is gettin too stuck up to wash one another's feet. They uster hev foot-washin's reg'lar. But now I hev to go over into Whitley to get my feet washed. Wy, brethering, wen the church was founded foot-washin' war a part on it ; an I do hate to see the Babtists—ah ! agoin' back into the beggarly elements of the world—ah ! For on this rock I will build my church—ah, an' the gates of hell shall not prevail against it—ah !"

Case listened with curiosity as the man began, and stood almost spell-bound as he told the story of his conversion. There was a rude eloquence in it, a wild poetic element, heightened by the cutting up into phrases and the sing-song tone. As he described the storm, it was easy to forget the person of the speaker, deformed, un-

kempt and dirty, until he came to the portion of his discourse which treated on foot-washing. This was too suggestive : it broke the spell. Case's eyes wandered over the crowd again. Just across, on the opposite slope, sat Jessie, and beside her the lank form of the Fodderstack bard, both looking as happy as he was miserable. The sight capped the climax of his adverse experiences. He suddenly lost all interest in his surroundings, and making his way back to the house, saddled his mule, and rode back to Cutshin.

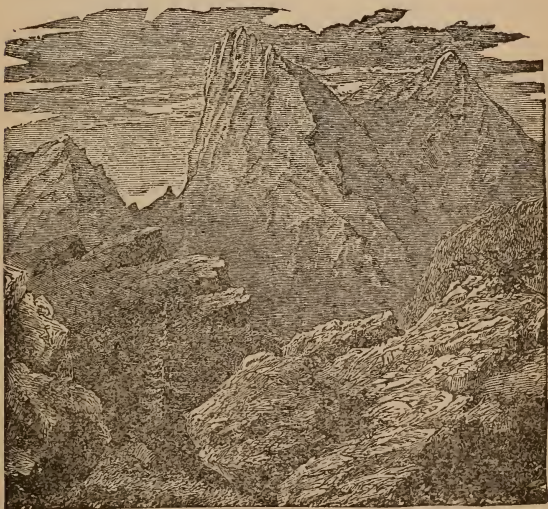
Todd was in rapture all day : and when they started homeward he recited poetry which grew more tender as twilight approached. The Judge occasionally interrupted him with some subject, religious or political, and the large party with which they started, rendered private conversation well nigh impossible ; but Todd found time to say more to Jessie than ever before. He was telling her about the autumn—in poetry, of course, and his words well described the scene about them as he told how,—

When the chestnut leaves grow yellow, and the dark
green poplars fade,
When the lone tree in the deadening takes its rich autumnal
shade;
When the hickory nuts are dropping through the brown
leaves, dead and curled,
And the foliage-hidden hill-top rocks frown down upon the
world:
When the withered oak-leaves tighter to their parent
branches hold,
And the sycamore's dead, sheeted ghost stands silent, white
and cold;
When the sumac-patch is blazing with its burning, crimson
glow,
And the elm again grows verdant with its wealth of mis-
tletoe;
When the sourwood's foliage brightens as the frosty even-
ings come,
And God's artist hurls his palate at the maple and the gum:
When the woodbine and the creeper-vine some favored trees
enfold,
In a many colored garment like the patriarch's son of old;
While the trees that stand about them with their trunks all
gray and bare,
Scowl like Joseph's jealous brethren at the coat so rich and
fair:
And the royal pine in triumph wears his green tiara still,
And it seems a fallen rainbow clothes each variegated hill—
And was going on to tell how, by some
such association of ideas as poets under-
stand, all these things suggested to his mind
thoughts of one for whom his love could

never die, when the judge broke in with :

"I had ter laugh while I was alookin' at the falls, about the money the gov'maint is aspendin' to improve the river above thar. Our legislater votes that the Cumberland is navigable : so it is further down—everybody knows thet. Then our member o' Congress says, sezee, 'Ef I don't fetch some money back to my deestruck, the people won't 'lect me agin'. So he asts the gov'maint fur a ten thousan' dollar 'propriation ter improve the upper Cumberland. Some person asts 'Is the Cumberland navigable up thar?' 'Cose it is,' sezee, 'don' you see wut the legislater says?' Well, most of the tother members o' Congress has some like scheme o' their own, so no person objects. So hit passes, an' the money comes back, an' they make a good ford at Bar'ville, an' give work to some men thet haint got nothin' ter do. An' then wen hit comes 'lection time, people says, 'I'm agoin' ter vote fur the man that fetches money back inter his own dees-trick.' I reckon hit's all right, kase they all do hit, an' we mought as well hev our sheer ; I reckon thet's wut Congress is fur.

But I was athinkin' when I was alookin' at the falls - now jes' s'posin' a case. S'posin' thet a steamboat cud git down through them nine mill-dams, an' over the falls, how'd she git up agin? *I* wanter know. How'd a steamboat look aclimbin' up sixty-six foot o' pupendic'lar rock? Navigable? Wall, wen the first boat tries ter navigate the falls I wanter be thar an' see hit, that's all! ha, ha, ha!''



FODDERSTACK MOUNTAIN AND GABLE PEAK.

Then he rode ahead until Todd was growing poetical again, when he halted to let them overtake him and said :

"I sorter 'lowed Tom Badger 'ud a had his wife's funeral preached while the 'Sociation was hyur : she died 'bout six months ago. I ast him about it. He said he'd be willin', only she war his second wife, an' he hadn't never got 'round ter hev his fust one's preached yit. Her folks is non-residents, lives over in Breathitt, an' he felt as though he orter sarve legal notice on 'em, and not hev the funeral *ex parte*, so he lowed he cudn't 'range fur hit on the docket this term. He said he s'posed he mought hev his second wife's funeral, but hit didn't seem right ter him ter hev the second wife's funeral afore the fust : he said he thought they war somethin' in the Bible 'bout the case of Rachel versus Leah,—somethin' in the judicial decision of the ole folks that seemed a precedent iur a continuance. So he 'lows ter call up the case agin' and hev both funerals ter oncet. But I see him ter-day atalkin' ter a gal from Licksillet, and I jest reckoned, ef Tom didn't hurry up with

them funerals, he's likely to hev a right smart of it to do when he does finally git round to it: hit'll crowd the docket ef he has many more on 'em."

As they rode on, these interruptions grew less frequent, and the judge, in his desire to be at home, rode further in advance. The crowd, too, thinned out at every fork of the road. At length as the tall cone of Fodderstack, with Gable Peak behind it, rose in sight above the tops of the intervening hills, he poured out to her the declaration of his love. She asked him to wait. Wait? Of course he would wait. He felt relieved that she should ask him to wait instead of accepting him at once, and thus seem less divine by reason of her condescending. How long should he wait? A fortnight! He would wait a century! He would have been less patient had he doubted the result of his waiting.

XI.

The next two weeks were happy ones for Todd. Never had his school seen him so cheerful, so almost jubilant. Although he he had been in no haste to claim his treasure, he experienced great joy when he found her so nearly in his possession. When the second Sunday came, he shaved clean and made an attempt to improve his appearance that quite surprised him, and set off for meeting: for on this, the first Sunday of the month, Cutshin regularly enjoyed the ministrations of Rev. David Carty, (pronounced Kyearty), who lived at the bend of the creek above. The weather had grown cold, and the congregation was small. Todd looked it over, and found that Mr. and Mrs. Jackson and Case were present, but not Jessie. A short time only he remained at church, and then hurried with quickening pulse to the Judge's house. Jessie was there alone.

No matter how much his superior a man believes a woman to be, he considers himself wronged if she refuses him. When Todd renewed his proposal to Jessie, and was refused by her, he spoke at first in broken, half incoherent sentences, as though he hardly understood her; then uttered quick, hot words of indignation and reproach, melting into tender entreaty and passionate appeal. But Jessie was firm. Yet she seemed loath to see him go, and walked with him to the gate, where he poured out his tale of love again, beneath the gothic dome of the tall hemlock by the road. At last he walked away, tearful and dejected, in the chill wind of the December day. Jessie stood and watched him out of sight, and wiped her eyes again and again, and at last burst into tears. But with that hypocrisy common to women, she was smiling when the family came home to dinner, and said nothing about Todd's visit.

There had been a new preacher at the church-house today, the Judge reported, and he and Brother Kyearty were to hold meeting the following night in Brother

Kyearty's house. The following day brought a snow-storm, which kept the Judge and his wife at home, but Case and Jessie attended the meeting. Brother Kyearty's cabin contained a single room with a stick chimney in one end, and opposite doors in the sides. That is, there were two apertures in the sides; there was only one "shetter," and that had lost its hinges, while the other hole was closed by a blanket. The few chairs were already taken, and Case wanted to sit with the other young men who had brought "calico," on the beds in the back end of the room; but he was called forward, that he might assist in the singing, and was seated on the sharpest angle of a rail.

Brother Marcus, from Scatchewan, for he was the new man, led the service. He propounded a theory of his own concerning the primal condition of the human race—that Adam and Eve were originally without bodies. Man was made "a living soul," *i.e.* disembodied; but he fell, and God made him "a coat of skin," that is, a body. With this theory came another, concerning

the incarnation. Christ was the Second Adam. In order that the battle between Adam and Satan should be fought through again under its former conditions, it was necessary that Satan should become incarnate, which he did in the person of Herod. So it was "the ole sarpint—ah, that was more sub-tilt than all the beastis o' the field—ah! thet slew all the male children—ah! from two year old an' under—ah! An' among the rest, he killed Rachel's children, an' Rachel felt mighty bad 'bout it—ah!"

This discourse was interspersed with loud responses from a pig which continually came through under the blanket and mingled among the feet of the congregation until a kick would send him for a time out into the cold again.

Brother Kyearty followed, but was at a loss how to proceed. He wished to show his brother minister all due courtesy, yet did not care to endorse before his own flock, views so new to him, and possibly fraught with mischief. Moreover, his attention had been distracted; for the combustible chimney repeatedly caught fire during the sermon,

and had to be extinguished by gourds of water skillfully thrown up the flue. He began thus :

"I haint got up as the second agent, if they's ben ary word o' truth spoke by the brother in yer midst, ter take hit outer yer mind. They's ben enough truth spoke hyur ternight ter save ten thousan' sich congregations as this. They's ben a heap o' gaps lef' down whar more mought a' ben said : but my mind haint ben on the line o' thought the brother's ben a follerin'. So I'll jes' take another tex' an' make a few scatterin' remarks. An' awhilest I jump round from place ter place, I want yer all ter try an' keep up with me, but don't git ahead o' me. Brother Dozier, won't yer jes' go out an' see if that chimbley is afire?"

Brother Dozier went out, and Brother Kyearty preached. A girl had taken his place as chief of the fire department, but was less skillful than he. Just as he was in the midst of his exhortation, and was dwelling with gusto on the torments of "eternal tradition," this girl succeeded in emptying a gourdful of water on a woman and

five or six children in the chimney corner. This nearly ruined the exhortation; for it caused the preacher to lose his place, and forget where to begin again:

"An' neow dyin' sinner—ah! Do you want'er go deown to eternal tra-dition—ah? Oh! dyin' sinner—*Quit throwin' thet warter!*"

After the meeting, the people crowded around the fire, and prepared their pine torches, and told the news. There had been no school today in the Fodderstack district. The children had climbed up the mountain, and found Todd's cabin door open, and the cabin empty. Todd's books and clothes—in all less than a trunkful—were gone, and the poet had left for parts unknown. No one could assign a reason, beyond the fact that Todd was subject to freaks of an unaccountable nature. But Case and Jessie walked home in silence.

When Jessie was alone she opened a small package which some one had handed her at the meeting. It contained a sprig of holly with leaves and berries, and a few lines in a well-known hand.

THE HOLLY'S MESSAGE.

I've been where the holly tree's changless green
Has stood for a century past, and seen
The woods grow green with the birth of spring,
And bright with the changes the summers bring,
Then turn in autumn to brown and red,
And in winter stand faded, and naked, and dead.

And the trees in wonder have looked and seen
No change in the holly-tree's lovely green.
Its spring-time beauty it ne'er has lost.
It scorns the winter and mocks the frost.
When the woods around it stand bare and dead,
It taunts the cold blast with its berries red.

Today I climbed to the old tree's top,
And I plucked its branchlets and let them drop.
Descending, I gathered my clusters gay
And stole from the winter a grand bouquet.
But the fairest cluster on all the tree,
I plucked it, and saved it my love for thee.

Oh, take this cluster of berries, sweet,
And the heart that lies with them at your feet.
Oh! take them, and from them may you hear
My heart's own voice in your own heart's ear—
"Be true, my darling, be true to me;
Be constant and true like the holly tree."

Crush me not as now at thy feet I lie,
For my heart with thy love for me, must die.
Oh! smile on me now in this dark, cold day,
As thou did'st in our young love's verdant May!
I love thee, dear Jessie, I love but thee!
Be constant: change not like the holly tree!

XII.

Shortly before the close of the term, Case wrote to Parsons as follows :

CUTSHIN, December 15th.

My dear old Parsons :—This is my last letter until we meet. I am glad that we are to see each other so soon, but could almost wish to defer our meeting for the sake of more of your good letters. I was greatly amused by your account of the man who wanted you to fill out the presentation page in the book you sold him, and his neighbors all insisting that you should do as well by them. When the future traveler goes along Lost Fork, and sees that you have presented a fine book to every family on the creek, what a generous fellow he will think you !

The weather has been quite cold, and we have had a hard snow storm. I am glad that the days of my teaching in this open pen are numbered. My school-house has a stove : most of them have only fire-places.

But I am not proud, for my stove has no pipe. At least there are only two joints, and I need four. I asked the trustees for pipe long ago, but there was no money in the treasury and no means of getting any. Jackson is away half the time, and the others are shamefully negligent. At last they told me that it was getting so late they didn't think it worth while to buy pipe for this term. There is no pipe for sale here, and I am teaching every day, so can't get away to buy any for myself. I had made most of the school apparatus, but had to draw the line at pipe. I moved the benches outside, and rolled up a log-heap, from whose cheerful blaze I tried to kindle the intellectual flame in the minds of my cherubs. The scheme worked well until a windy day came. Then, no matter on which side of the fire I stood, the smoke blew into my eyes. You will readily believe this statement if you have heard the mountain proverb, "Beauty draws smoke."

So I hit upon another expedient. I have a table in my school-room. Not every teacher can say as much. I moved that

table under the chimney, lifted my stove upon it, placed my two lengths of pipe in position, and lit a fire. It works like a charm. I now warm my feet in a manner peculiarly pleasant to me, without feeling that I am setting a bad example before my school. We have plenty of wood, and need it too, for we have to heat all space.

I can't keep the best of order now. The seats are arranged so as to get as many as possible near the fire. When those next the stove are warm, they change places with those further back. In about half an hour the school is about as well mixed up as to age, sex and previous condition of scholarship as if it had been shaken in a sack.

One day, recently, I heard a "Te-he!" and looking in at the chief offender, inquired with professional severity of voice and a pedagogic frown—

"Elijah! At what are you laughing?"

"I—Te-he! I was alaughin' at Cis' an' Marthy."

"What were Cicero and Martha doing?"

"I don't like to tell."

"Cicero, what were you doing?"

(Doggedly) "I was a settin' here."

"What else were you doing?"

(Sheepishly) "Well—I had—my arm—around—so."

"Around Martha?"

(Hesitatingly) "Ye—yes, sir."

"Was Martha willing?"

(Doubtfully) "Well—*jist tol'able*."

I hardly knew how to proceed with that "amusin' littel kangaroo;" for every punishment which I have inflicted upon him during the past five months has proved ineffective. Moreover, he seemed to be telling the literal truth. Martha, who is four years his senior, and rather corpulent, was "jist tol'able willin'." I believe that usually in such cases, *Similia similibus curantur*, so made them continue to sit together, thinking that she would tire of it, even if he did not. But he tagged her around at recess, and managed to keep near her all the time, she seeming half pleased, half annoyed by his attentions. The school enjoyed it more than I did. When night came, and I saw him walking home with Martha, and indulg-

ing in burlesque gallantries, I resolved not to prescribe homeopathic treatment for such a case again. But in the morning, when Cicero came to school, drawing Martha up the long hill on his sled, Martha still seeming "jist tol'able willin'," I had to acknowledge that he had outdone me, by requesting him to discontinue his attentions to Martha.



"JIST TOL'ABLE WILLIN'.

About Jessie—really, I don't know what to say. I wish I did. I never saw a prettier girl, or a truly better one. But life

here and life in Ohio are very different things, and she knows nothing of the sort of life that I expect to enjoy. To be sure, the Judge and his family have a certain pleasant sort of culture, but after all, she has not had the advantages which I want my wife to have had. Then it will be a long time before I shall be ready to marry. But she is such a pure, sweet, affectionate, intelligent girl that I sometimes think I almost love her.

Todd has left Fodderstack. No one knows where he has gone, or why. People have ceased to wonder at his queer freaks. I used to think he was desperately in love with Jessie, and sometimes think so still; but, on the whole, am inclined to believe that he simply wanted her to rave about, and never thought of marrying. You poets don't have much real heart, but want some pretty girl to pose as a target for your poetical projectiles. Yet I almost believe that if he had stayed here, he would have driven me on until I should have proposed to Jessie. Since he has left, I am thinking over the matter more calmly. Sometimes I think Jessie

cares for him : at others I think she cares for me. It is natural enough that she should enjoy his nonsense, and be willing to tolerate me in her society without caring for either of us. But whether she cares for either of us, or either of us for her, I really don't know. If she only had a better education, *I'd find out*. I am tempted to do so any way, but fear that when she should arrive in the North, where I could compare her with other girls, I should be ashamed of her. I feel ashamed to have written those last words. She is a girl of whom no man ought to feel ashamed. I did not mean exactly ashamed. Perhaps you understand me better than I can explain myself. Really, I believe that if I were to hear another man talking thus, I should think him a selfish brute. But I do not mean to be wholly selfish. It would be as unjust to her as to myself to marry her unless we were to be happy. Excepting for her lack of advantages, she is the peer of any girl living : she is in many respects tenfold my superior, and I am not sure that my heart will not fail me before I leave, and make me propose to her.

If so, any man who dares to mention her lack of education, let him die the death! For the girl is better than her grammar, and her heart than her handwriting. I think perhaps I had better wait, however, until I get away from here, and see other women, and think it over soberly. Then, if need be, I can write. The trouble with me is that, like Martha, I feel "jist tol'able willin'." I wish I felt more so, or less. God forgive me if I have wronged Jessie. I have not meant to do so. If I have deceived her, I have also deceived myself. But as I look back over this summer, I rather wish I had managed myself a little differently.

I leave this place with joy and sorrow mingled. I have never been more kindly treated than here. What a generous, hospitable set these mountain people are! Don't you like their custom of speaking to strangers when they meet? Why don't we do so in the North? Why should you and I pass each other with a cold stare, because no one has chanced to say, "Mr. Parsons, this is Mr. Case?" Why should we when we meet

systematically ignore each other's existence, as though we were beings of different orders, and could not speak the same language? Thus we feel a sort of chill after meeting a fellow creature. Why not speak and smile, and pass on, each with his heart beating a little faster because for an instant it has beat in contact and unison with another heart? To be sure we are not acquainted: we do not need to be. We are both human and wish each other well, and can make the fact understood, and that is sufficient reason why we should speak, and manifest our own, and recognize each other's humanity. To speak requires no more effort than to stare, and is a thousand times more rational. Yes, sir: I believe in the mountaineer's hearty "Good morning!" and his equally hearty and more convenient "Howdy!"

But now, good-bye, and God bless you.

Ever your friend,

NATHAN A. CASE.

A few days after this, the term closed with the grandest school exhibition ever witnessed on Cutshin, and next day Case

left for London, to which point the railroad had been completed, and where Parsons met him. Together they turned their back upon the hill country and journed northward to pursue their professional studies together.

Old Eleazar Van Horn, having long wanted to visit Louisville, went with Case to London, and thence on to the city with the two friends. While waiting for the train, he looked long at the two rusty iron rails on which, as he was informed, the train was to arrive, and said :

"Atter all, Mr. Case, I caint git over some o' them things you said about the shape o' the yearth. Now, jes' see them rails. They keep acomin' nigher an' nigher tergether, 'twell they mighty nigh come inter one. Hit does look lack thet shows thet everything keeps aworkin' to-wards the center o' gravity-tation, jes' lack you said."

On the cars, as they rode along, a man, whose face was covered with strips of court-plaster, related to the passengers the details of an accident through which he had just passed. Another train had run into his



from the rear, telescoping the car in which he sat. His seat-mate was crushed to death between the seats, but he saved his own life by a wild leap through the glass. The vivid description was listened to with breathless interest by all the passengers. Eleazar, stood leaning over the speaker, with mouth wide open. As the tale was finished, Eleazar looked at the window with its novel appointments, and said :

"Wull—ef thet air wash-board hed aben down, you wouldn't agot out so easy!"

For himself, he decided to take as few risks as possible, and as his seat-mate wanted the blind down to keep out the light of the sun upon the snow, Eleazar moved to the wood-box, where he could better warm his feet, and be near a window with its wash-board up.

The young men showed him as much attention in the city as their limited time allowed, and left him at length, in a restaurant, wrestling with the printed bill of fare. The only complaint which mingled with his lurid description of the city, on his return, was that he had nearly starved.

Jessie expected Case to say something before he left. Poor girl! How disappointed she was! There was nothing "jist tol'able" in the situation for her. That night she thought it all over, and gave way to bitter tears. A fortnight later she received a letter from Case, and opened it with a flushed cheek and trembling hand. He had arrived at his home, and with his friend Parsons was enjoying the Christmas

festivities. He wanted to thank her and her parents again for all that they had done to make his stay in the mountains enjoyable. He had never spent a more pleasant summer. He found that he had left a relic of no intrinsic value, but one which he prized highly—a grape shot which he had found at Cumberland Gap. Would she not take charge of it and keep it for him? He would have a chance to send for it sometime, or better, might come back to the mountains himself some day and get it.



Jessie thought she could read affection between the lines. Her heart gave a great leap when he said that he had never spent a more pleasant summer, and another when he spoke of coming back. She wrote him a letter in red ink, assuring him that she would keep his grape-shot until he came, and saying that this had been to her, also, a very happy summer.

Case was heartily glad to receive the letter. When he found how eagerly he was looking for it, he threatened within himself to send by the next mail after its arrival, a proposal of marriage. But the red ink and the poor penmanship, and the grammatical errors made him hesitate. And as time went on, the intensity of his feeling somewhat abated, though he never remembered Jessie without emotion that bordered on sincere affection. But he waited.

And Jessie waited, and still waits. And how shall it end? Will Case return and claim his relic, and its pretty and faithful custodian, or must Jessie wait as her mother waited, for one who never came? Will the poet return to Fodderstack, or will he

mourn for Jessie in verses that denounce her as untrue, and find at length another shrine at which to worship? If he returns, will she accept the love that was hers at first, and must ever so remain? Will her heart turn from one who seems false, to one who was ever true? As yet she keeps the grape-shot, and watches, perhaps with the same, perhaps with diminished interest, for its owner. But who knows whether with it she may treasure a faded water lily, a sprig of holly, and the sad lines of the Fodderstack poet?



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